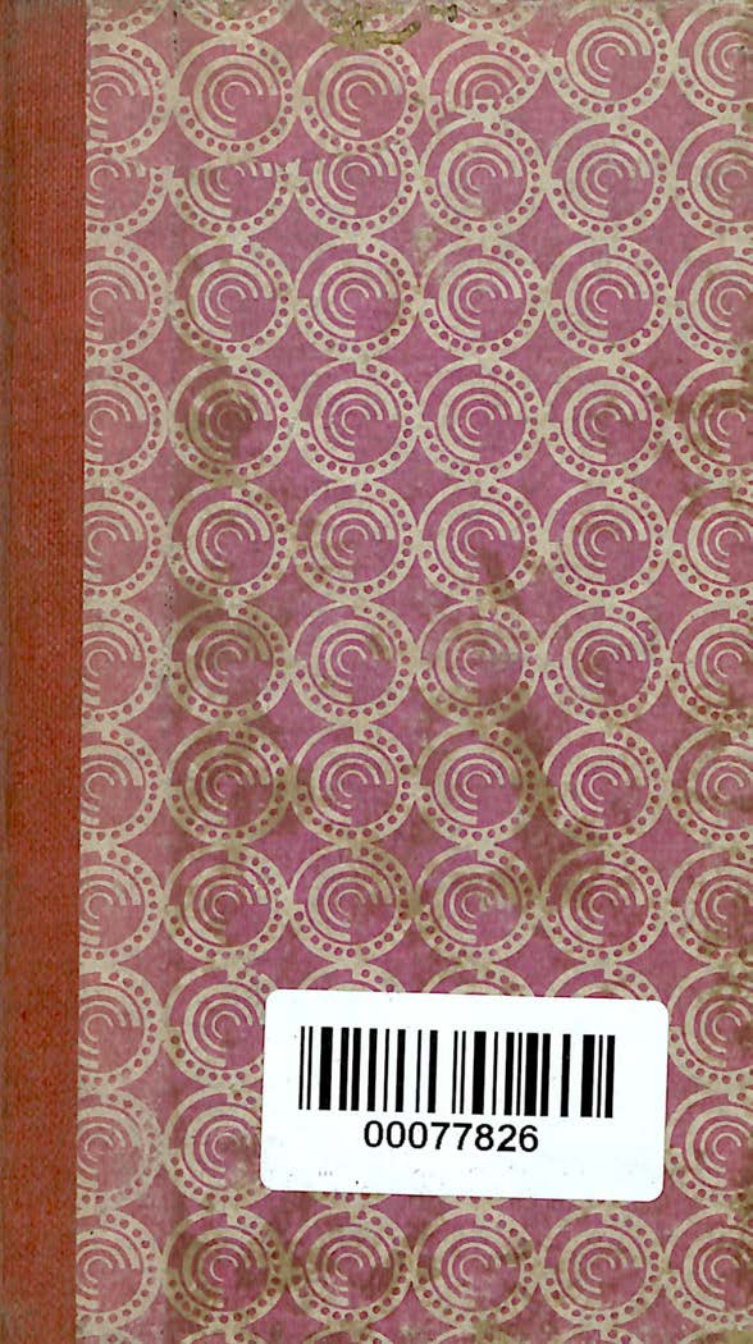
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GERMAN STORIES:

SELECTED FROM THE WORKS OF

HOFFMANN, DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ, PICHLER,

KRUSE, AND OTHERS.

By R. P. GILLIES, Esq.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH:
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ROLANDSITTEN;

OR

THE DEED OF ENTAIL.

ROLANDSITTEN;

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THE DEED OF ENTAIL.

CHAPTER I.

On the bleak shore of the Baltic sea, between the towns of Bernburg and Rovienne, is situated the old family mansion of the Barons von Rolandsitten. The immediate environs are wild and desolate. Scarcely here and there a single blade of grass rises out of the bottomless drift-sand, and instead of a garden,—the usual adjunct of a baronial castle, Rolandsitten has, on the landward side, only a frightful wood of Scotch firs, that, with their never changing gloom, seem to mock the beautiful garniture of the spring, and from whose dark umbrage, instead of the delightful songs of the blackbird and nightingale, nothing is heard but the croaking of ravens, and the storm-boding screams of the sea-fowl.

Only about half a mile distant, however, all nature suddenly changes. As if by the wand of an enchanter, one finds himself here transported into a blooming district of luxuriant corn fields and meadows. Here, too, is visible the large flourishing village of Rolandsitten, with the commodious house of the Baron's land steward, and beside a pleasant thicket of older trees, are observable the foundations of a large castle, which one of the former proprietors had intended to build. His immediate successors, however, living on their other property in the dukedom of Courland, left his plans thus unfinished; and as for the Baron Roderick von Rolandsitten, who again took up his residence on the family estate, he never thought of building farther, since, to his dark and misanthropical disposition, the aspect of the lonely old castle was exactly suitable. Accordingly, he made its half ruinous apartments be repaired as well as he could, and shut himself up in it, with a frightful old scarecrow of a house-steward, and a very slender establishment.

This Baron Roderick seldom appeared in the village. However, he both walked and rode frequently on the bleak shore, and people insisted that

from a distance, they heard him talking aloud, and saw him listening to the roaring breakers, as if he could hear answering and intelligible voices from the sea. On the highest pinnacle of the watch-tower, he had fitted up a kind of study, and supplied it with telescopes, quadrants, and all sorts of philosophical apparatus. From thence, in the day time, he contemplated the ships, as, like white-winged sea birds, they floated across the distant horizon; and every star-light night he used to spend there, occupied with astronomical, or, as some would have it, with astrological labours, in which the old steward assisted him.

The report, indeed, was very general during his lifetime, and still more after his death, that he was devoted to the occult sciences, or Black Art, and that, by the failure of some of his magical operations, by which he had greatly injured, or offended, a noble family in Courland, he had been obliged to fly from the capital of that dukedom. The slightest allusion to his residence there, filled him with horror. But, whatever misfortunes had befallen him, he ascribed them wholly to the conduct of his predecessors, who, as he said, had wickedly deserted the ancestral castle. In order

that, for the future at least, the representatives of the family might be induced to reside at Rolandsitten, he made the property, in the strictest manner, by a formal deed of entail, into a *majorat*. The Prince of the district was the more willing to ratify this arrangement, as he wished to retain, under his own government, a family that had, in former times, produced several brave soldiers, but which had already spread its branches into foreign territories.

Neither Baron Roderick's son Hubert, however, nor Baron Roderick the second, in whose times I first knew the family, chose to live in their ancestral mansion; for it was to be expected, that, being of more cheerful dispositions than the gloomy astrologer, they were repelled by the frightful loneliness of his residence. Baron Roderick the second, of whom I am about to write from personal recollections, had granted two old unmarried aunts (sisters of his father) house-room, and a competent pension on the property. They, accordingly, took up their abode in small apartments in one of the wings, and besides them and the cook, who had a large room adjoining the kitchen, in the ground-floor, there was an old worn-

out *chasseur*, who tottered about the long galleries of the *keep*; and fulfilled also the duties of *castellan*. The rest of the establishment lived in the village with the land-steward.

It was only in the end of autumn, when the first snow began to fall, and the wolf and boar hunting commenced, that the desolate neglected castle assumed a new aspect. Then the Baron Roderick came with his young and beautiful consort, all his friends and relatives, and a numerous train of hunters and servants from Courland. The neighbouring nobility and amateurs of the chace, also flocked to Rolandsitten; so that every room in the large rambling building was inhabited. Fires roared in every stove and chimney;—the cook was at work from morning to night;—the vaulted roofs resounded to music and dancing, jovial songs, and ringing of glasses. All was mirth and rejoicing; so that, for five or six weeks, the castle was more like a well-frequented inn in a crowded town, than the abode of a private family.

Baron Roderick, meanwhile, devoted this period as well as he could to serious business, and, retired from the tumult of his guests, looked over

his steward's accounts. Not only did he carefully draw his rents, but attended to every proposal for improvements, or to the least complaint of his tenants, endeavouring to right all their grievances to the utmost of his power. In these affairs, the old Hofrath Winkler, my granduncle, who had for many years been law agent of the family, used to assist him, and, for this purpose, the Hofrath used to set out from his own residence in the town of Bernburg, about eight days before the time appointed for the Baron's arrival at the castle.

In the year 1798, the season had come round, when the advocate Winkler was to take his usual journey to Rolandsitten. Though the good old man, now in his seventieth year, still found himself healthy and active, yet he no doubt felt that a helping hand would be useful to him in business. As if half in jest, he one day said to me, "nephew, methinks it would not be amiss if you were to snuff the cold sea air for a while, and go with me to Rolandsitten. Besides, that you can assist me in the business, which is often intricate enough, you can make a trial how you like the wild life of a hunter, and how, after having drawn out

a handsome law paper one morning, you can, on the next, look a grim shaggy wolf in the face, or a wild boar with his long tusks, and shoot him dead with your firelock." Of course, I could not have heard so many grand accounts of the October meetings at Rolandsitten, or entertain such respect as I did towards my excellent old uncle, without being most anxious to go with him; and as I had been already pretty well initiated in the kind of business which he had to transact, I promised that I would work most industriously, so as to take all the labour off his shoulders.

On the following morning, therefore, we found ourselves seated in his carriage, rolled up in warm fur cloaks, and in the midst of a thick snow-drift, announcing the arrival of an early winter, we pursued our way to Rolandsitten. On the road, the old gentleman told me many strange stories of the former Baron Roderick, who had established the *majorat*, and by whom my uncle, then a very young man, had been appointed agent and executor. He dwelt especially on the rough wild temper which the old Baron had exhibited, and which seemed more or less to be inherited

by all the family, as even the present proprietor, whom he had first known as a mild-tempered, somewhat feeble youth, began more and more to betray the same kind of disposition. On this account he advised me, if I wished to obtain the Baron's favour, to behave with as much boldness and unembarrassment as I could assume. Finally, he spoke of the rooms that we were to have at the castle, which he had chosen once for all, because they were very warm, and so conveniently retired, that we could withdraw when we pleased from the noisy society by which it was constantly beset. In two apartments, namely, hung with old tapestry, and adjoining to the audience chamber, in the wing opposite to that in which the old ladies resided, his lodgings were always kept well aired, and ready against his arrival.

At last, after a rapid, but laborious journey, we came late at night to Rolandsitten, and drove through the village. It was Sunday evening, and in the wine-houses were still to be heard the sounds of music and dancing. The steward's house, from the ground to the garret, was lighted up, and in it, too, we heard music and song. On

that account, the desolation was yet more frightful which awaited us, when we drew near to the mansion-house. The sea-wind howled in lamentable cutting cadences around us, and as if they had been awoke from preternatural sleep, the dark old fir trees groaned and heaved responsive to the blast. At last we could distinguish the black ghastly walls of the castle, rising nakedly from the snow-covered ground; and our postillion drew up at the gate, which was yet closed against us. But there, for some time, all our calling, knocking, blowing of horns, and cracking of whips were in vain. It seemed as if all in the house were dead, and from no window was there a light visible.

The old gentleman became angry. "Francis! Francis!" cried he in a tremendous voice, "where the devil art thou? Rouse, rouse thyself, or we shall be frozen to death at the gate. The snow drives in one's face like pins and needles. Rouse, I say, once more, or may the devil fetch thee!" Then a mastiff dog began to whine and growl. A wandering light was visible from the ground floor; keys rattled, and in a short time the great gate began to groan and roll open its ponderous

wings. "Ha, is this indeed your honour? Welcome *Herr Justitiarius*, though unexpected, and in this desperate weather!" So said the old Francis, holding up the lantern, whose light fell strangely on his withered face, that was fearfully contorted into a grimace, intended for a good-humoured smile. The carriage moved into the court, where we alighted, and now, for the first time, I had a full view of the man's odd figure. His *chasseur* livery was completely old-fashioned, with wide breeches, and the sleeves ornamented with knots and embroidery, in a manner such as till now I had never beheld. Over his broad pale forehead hung only a few scattered locks; the under part of his face wore the ruddy colouring of health; and though altogether his features had the effect of a caricature mask, yet a kind of good-natured expression which shone in his eyes compensated for all the rest.

"Now, old Francis," began my uncle, beating the snow from his fur mantle in the lobby, "is every thing prepared? Are the tapestry and carpets in my room well dusted? Are the beds carried in? and have you kept on large fires both to day and yesterday?" "No," answered Francis,

very composedly, "most worthy Sir, nothing of all this has been done." "Good God!" said my uncle, "I wrote to you in proper time. I come always at the precise day and date. It is abominably stupid! We shall now have to sleep in rooms ice-cold and damp."—"Nay, most worshipful *Herr Justitiarius*," said Francis, clipping a thief from the candle, and then stamping it out carefully with his foot, "you will please to observe, that all this, and especially the fires, would not have helped much, for the wind and snow came in too strongly through the broken windows; and then——" "What?" said my uncle, spreading out his fur cloak, and sticking his hands in his sides, "the windows, forsooth, are broken, and thou who art the castellan hast done nothing to repair them?" "Nay, but most excellent Sir," resumed the old man, with great composure and coolness, "one cannot well get at the windows, on account of the stones and rubbish that are lying in the rooms"— "What in the name of ten thousand devils has brought stones and rubbish into my room?" said my uncle. "Wishing you all health and happiness, young gentleman!" said Francis, bowing politely as I happened to sneeze;

then adding, "I mean the stones and plaster of the partition wall, that fell in at the terrible shock." "Have you had an earthquake?" roared my uncle, now in great wrath. "Not that, most worshipful Sir," said the old man, with a grin over his whole visage, "but three days ago, the wainscot ceiling of the audience hall fell in with an awful crash." "So then, may the——" My uncle was about to utter a tremendous execration, but checked himself, and pulling off his great fox-skin cap, he turned round to me—"In truth, nephew, we must hold our tongues, and ask no more questions, otherwise we shall only hear of more misfortunes, or the whole castle will tumble down about our ears. But Franz," added he, "could you not have had the sense to get another room cleared out and warmed for me? Or might not you fit up some room in the *keep*, for an audience hall on the rent day?" "That has already all been done," replied the old man, kindly pointing to the staircase, and beginning to ascend. "Have you ever seen such a strange fellow?" said my uncle, winking to me as we followed the *chasseur*.

The way led through long vaulted passages and corridors, where Francis, with his glimmer-

ing candle, threw a strange doubtful light into the darkness. As we moved along, the flickering shadows made the pillars with their capitals, and the variegated ceilings, seem as if moving and floating in the air. Our own gigantic shadows, too, were seen stalking after us, and the grotesque paintings over which they glided seemed to totter and tremble. I could imagine, that the latter even spoke with audible voices, and that their whispering tones mingled with the echo of our sounding steps. "Wake us not!" said they, "wake us not, ghostly people of the olden time, that here sleep beneath these mouldering battlements!"

At last, when we had gone through a long range of cold spectral rooms, Francis opened a hall of considerable dimensions, in which a clear burning wood fire gleamed pleasantly as if to welcome us. As soon as I entered this room, I felt quite comfortable, but my uncle remained standing in the middle of the floor,—looked round him, and said in a grave, almost solemn tone, "This then is to be the hall of justice?" Francis at that moment held up his lamp, so that the gleam fell on a light-coloured square compartment in the wall, where

it seemed to me that there had once been a door, which was now plastered up. Then in a hollow, half-suppressed tone, "It will not," said he, "be for the first time that justice has been fulfilled here?" "What art thou muttering, Frank?" said my uncle, throwing off his fur mantle, and going up to the fire. "Nothing—nothing," said Francis, "only a few chance words." Then he lighted the wax candles, and opened the next room, of smaller size, which was very conveniently fitted up for our reception.

In a short time, a table was spread for us before the fire, and the old man brought in several well-dressed dishes; after which, according to northern fashion, we were served with a bowl of punch, which to wearied travellers could not but be very acceptable. Tired with his journey, my uncle went to bed as soon as his supper was finished; but the novelty of every thing,—the strangeness of the old mansion, (not to speak of the strong punch,) had excited my spirits to a degree which prevented me from thinking of sleep. Francis, meanwhile, cleared the table, stirred the fire, and left me with divers polite bows and cringes.

Now, then, I was seated alone in a lofty capa-

cious *Rittersaal.* The storm had ceased to moan and howl, and the snow-drift no longer beat against the lattice. The sky too was become clear, and the bright full moon shone through the large bow windows, illuminating with a magical effect many dark corners of this mysterious mansion, into which the dull light of my two wax candles, and the glimmer of a wood-fire, could not penetrate. According to the fashion still extant in old castles, the walls and the ceiling were richly ornamented, the former with fantastic paintings and gilding, the latter with heavy carved oak-work. What seemed most of all formidable, was that, from the large pictures which many times represented boar and wolf hunts, started forward the carved wooden heads of men and horses, so that, amid the combined flickering of the fire and the moon, the whole appeared to be alive and animated with a fearful and horrible reality. Among these hunting-pieces there were representations large as life, of knights stalking along in their hunting-dresses, probably portraits of ancestors who delighted in the chace.

Every thing, both in the paintings and carved work, wore the dark dingy hue of antiquity, so

that on this account the difference of colour was the more remarkable in that spot of the same wall, through which there were two doors that led to neighbouring chambers. In a short time I convinced myself that here also there must have been a door, which had been lately built up, whence this part of the wall was devoid of ornament, and contrasted so remarkably with the rest of the apartment.

Who has not felt at one time or another the mysterious effects of unwonted scenery and "circumstance?" Even the dullest imagination is roused to action by being placed in the wild romantic valley, or beneath the dark arches of an old abbey at midnight. Add to this, that I was now only in my twentieth year, and (as before said,) had drank several glasses of strong punch, so that it is not to be wondered at, if, in this old *Rittersaal*, I felt myself in a mood of mind such as I had never before experienced. Let one imagine to himself the still pensive hour of midnight, amid whose silence the hollow roaring of the sea, and piping of the wind, (for the storm did not long slumber,) sounded like the notes of some tremendous organ touched by supernatural hands.

There were white clouds, too, such as I had never seen till now, and which, borne on by the wind, and glittering in the moonshine, seemed now and then inclined to stop, and like gigantic spectres to stare in at the rattling bow-windows. However, the sensations which I experienced were only such as one entertains on hearing a well told ghost story, and which I was rather disposed to encourage than to resist.

It occurred to me, therefore, that this was the very best time possible for reading a book, which, in common with every votary of the romantic and marvellous (in 1798,) I used to carry as a pocket companion. This was Schiller's "Ghost Seer." I sat over the fire, and read, and read,—till my fancy became always more and more excited, and at length I had come to that admirable description of the wedding festival at the house of the Count von V——. Just as the bloody form of Jeronimo made his appearance, the door leading from the corridor flew violently open. In great terror, I started up, and the book fell out of my hand. But in the next moment all was again silent, and I was ashamed of my childish fears. It might be that from a gust of wind, or in some other na-

tural manner, the door had thus started open. "It is nothing," said I, "only my imagination is so wound up, that it represents every ordinary occurrence as supernatural." Thus composed, I took up my book from the ground, and threw myself into the arm-chair.

I had scarcely begun to turn over the leaves, when I distinctly heard soft and slow measured steps along the floor of the hall, and at the same time a noise of sighing and moaning, which seemed like the utterance of the very deepest and most hopeless grief. Yet I was determined not to be deceived in such a manner. "It must be only some animal," said I, "that is shut up in the under-floor of the house. Such *acoustic* deceptions of the night are well known; for in the deep silence even distant sounds appear as if they were close to us;—but who would be so foolish as to allow himself to be terrified on that score?" Thus I again tranquillized myself; but now there was heard an intolerable scratching on the wall, and deeper sighs,—even groans, as if in deadly anguish, were audible, and appeared to come from that closed-up door already described. "Aye, no doubt," said I, "there must be some poor ani-

mal shut up there. I shall now call out as loud as I can, and stamp on the floor. All then will either be silent immediately, or the creature, whatever he may be, will express himself more plainly, and in more natural tones."

Such were my intentions, but fear got the better of me; my blood ran chill in every vein; cold sweat stood upon my forehead, and I remained in my chair as if petrified, not able to rise up, much less to cry out. The abominable scratching at length ceased, and the steps were heard again. It seemed as if some new impulse gave me life and motion. I started up, and went forward two or three steps; but then there came an ice-cold draught of wind through the hall, and in the same moment the moon broke in, and threw her clear light against the portrait of a grave, austere looking man. I stared at him as if fascinated. Methought the eyes moved, and, as if amid the roaring of the sea, and the shrill piping of the night wind, I distinctly heard the words, "Go no farther! Go no farther! or thou shalt encounter all the horrors of the spiritual world!"

Now the hall door slammed to with great force. I heard anew the steps moving along the gal-

lery. They seemed to descend the staircase; the door that led into the court opened, croaking on its hinges, and was again closed. Then it appeared to me as if a horse were brought from the stable, and led back again. The door was once more opened and shut, after which all was quiet.

At that moment, however, I observed that my uncle, in his bed-room, groaned and struggled fearfully. This roused me quite from my ghostly reverie, and I went to him directly with the light. The old gentleman seemed conflicting with a heavy and frightful dream. "Uncle! uncle! rouse yourself—awake!" cried I, taking him by the arm, and letting the gleam of the lamp fall on his face. Hereupon he started up with a fearful cry, but immediately regained composure, and looked at me good-humouredly. "You have kept watch in good time, nephew, and it is well that you have awoke me. I have had a very ugly dream; but that is wholly owing to this bed-room, and the adjoining hall, for I was forced to think on past times, and on many strange events which have happened here. Now, we must go to sleep in good earnest." With these words, the old man rolled himself up in the coverlid, and seemed im-

mediately to fall asleep. But, when I had extinguished the candles, and also gone to bed, I perceived that he was in a low voice saying his prayers.

On the following day, our business regularly began. The steward came with his accounts, and every half hour people announced themselves, some with disputes to complain of, others with plans for improvement of their houses, &c. About mid-day, my uncle went over with me, in order that we might pay our respects in due form to the two old Baronesses. Francis, the old *chasseur*, who was attending in the antiroom, announced to us that we must wait for a few minutes. Then a little old woman, bent with the load of sixty years, and attired in coloured silks, who styled herself lady in waiting, made her appearance, and led us into the drawing-room of these noble *demoiselles*. There, with a most grotesque parade and ceremony, the old Baronesses received us, exhibiting a style of dress and *tout-ensemble* that seemed to belong to another world. My uncle introduced me as a young lawyer, who had come to assist him in business, and they seemed by their looks to regard me with no inconsidera-

ble admiration, mingled with a doubtful kind of expression, as if from my youth they had reason to fear that the commonweal at Rolandsitten might in such hands fall into danger.

The whole scene with the two old ladies, their dress, conversation, and absurd *politesse*, were truly ridiculous. However, the fright of the preceding night still shuddered through my nerves. I felt myself as influenced by some unknown mysterious power; as if I stood on the extreme verge of a circle, which, if I were once led on to cross, I should immediately fall into the sphere of spectres and hobgoblins, and at last be driven to utter madness. Consequently it happened that the old Baronesses, with their strange towering head-dresses, and their indescribable garb, ornamented with flowers, embroidery and ribbons, instead of being merely laughable, appeared to me supernatural and ghostly. In their withered yellow visages and twinkling eyes, in their broken French gibberish, that came half through their skinny lips, and half through their long peaked noses, I had ocular and auricular proof, that these old scarecrows were at least on good terms with the ghosts that dwelt in this frightful mansion, and

that if so inclined, they could also bring perplexity and mischief on every one who had the misfortune to incur their displeasure.

After our visit, my uncle, who was naturally an excellent humorist, gave his opinion of the old ladies in such manner, and made up such a description, that at another time I should certainly have given way to the most immoderate laughter. However, as I have said, the Baronesses with their long noses, and French jargon, continued to be in my estimation frightful and ghostly; and the old advocate, who expected of course that I would be diverted with his talk, looked at me with astonishment. After dinner, as I still remained in the same mood, he broke out. "Nephew, will you be so good as to explain what the devil is the matter with you? You will not laugh, speak, eat, nor drink! Art thou sick, or what in the name of wonder has happened here?"

Of course, I did not hesitate to tell him all the horrid experiences that I had encountered on the foregoing night. I would not, however, conceal anything that might invalidate my own accuracy, especially that I had drank a good share of punch, and that I had been reading Schiller's

"Ghost Seer." "I ought to mention these circumstances in particular," said I; "because it may be very possible that all which I witnessed was the mere creation of my own brain." Hereupon I expected that my uncle would set upon me with the whole artillery of his wit, and turn me into extreme ridicule. Instead of this, he was very serious, fixed his eyes staring on the floor,—then looked up with an expression almost of severity and anger. "I am not acquainted," said he, "with that idle romance book which you have been reading, but you have not been indebted to it, nor to the punch, nor your own invention, for the impressions under which you suffered last night. I myself was visited in a dream, by the very same disturbances by which you were annoyed when awake. I sat just as you did, or seemed to do so, by the fire in my arm chair; but the ghost which you only heard, addressed himself to my visual organs, and this is perhaps the only difference betwixt us. Aye, indeed—I once more saw that depraved wretch, of whose history you as yet know nothing. I watched him enter the room, and glide along like a now powerless automaton, to the blocked up door;—

then in despair, he scratched against the wall, so, that the very blood seemed to flow out of his torn nails. I saw how he afterwards descended the stairs, led the horse out of the stable, and again brought it back. Did you mark how the cock crew in a distant farm-yard of the village? At that moment you awoke me, and I resisted the hateful influence of this evil spirit, who may, perhaps, yet have the power to intrude upon, and injure the living."

The old gentleman here stopped, and I did not like to ask him questions, being well aware that he would explain to me all that he found himself justified in revealing. After an interval, during which he sat lost in thought, he resumed,—" Nephew, hast thou courage enough, now that thou knowest something of the matter, once more to encounter the ghost, that is to say, if I will be your companion?" Of course, I answered, that I had abundance of courage, and was quite ready for the undertaking. " Then," said my uncle, " we shall next night keep watch together. I feel a kind of inward presentiment, which tells me this evil spirit must, of necessity, yield to certain exorcisms, which I alone am qualified to

employ, and I feel it to be my duty to banish, if possible, from the castle, a demon who would disturb its present possessors, and drive them from their property. But, should it be the will of God, that the spectre should get the better of me, then you may announce it to the world, that I fell in an honest Christian combat, and that, for my good intentions, at least, I am not undeserving of being kindly remembered. As for yourself, nephew, keep only in the back ground, and no harm will befall you."

The evening had now drawn on, and during the interval, I had thought little more of the ghost, on account of the variety of business which we had to arrange. At length Francis, as on the preceding evening, cleared the table, and brought us a smoking bowl of punch. The full moon shone brightly through the broken and gleaming clouds; the sea waves roared, and the night-wind shook the rattling panes of the bow-windows. For some time we forced ourselves to keep up the conversation on different subjects, though our minds were occupied by the most anxious expectation. The old gentleman had laid his gold repeater on the table. He pressed it, and it struck

twelve. Then the door started open with tremendous violence, and, just as on the preceding night, cautious slow steps were heard moving across the hall. The sighing and moaning were also repeated. My uncle was pale, but his eyes shone with unusual energy. He rose from his arm chair, drew up his tall figure to its utmost height, and with his right arm stretched forward, he assumed a most commanding and heroic attitude.

Meanwhile, the sighing and groaning became always louder, and the scratching on the wall even more abominable than on the preceding night. Then the old gentleman marched forwards to the walled-up door, planting his steps so firmly that the whole floor thundered beneath him. Just opposite to the place where the noise was most intolerable, he stood still, and, in a strong solemn voice, "Daniel, Daniel!" said he, "what art thou about here at such an hour?" Hereupon the ghost uttered a horrible, unearthly scream, that thrilled through every fibre of my frame, and a hollow sound ensued, as of some heavy weight falling to the ground. "Pray for mercy," said my uncle, "and compassion at the

throne of Heaven! There is thy proper place of refuge; but away with thee out of this life, to which thou never more canst belong!" It seemed then as if a low feeble moaning floated through the air, and died amid the rushing of the tempest, which now began to awake. Thereafter my uncle went to the hall door, and slammed it to with such vehemence, that the long desolate corridor echoed to the sound. In his whole behaviour there was something of grave and almost supernatural energy, by which I was completely awed. As he returned to his arm chair, his countenance brightened up, though still retaining a solemn expression. He folded his hands, and seemed to pray inwardly, in which manner some minutes passed away. Then he inquired, with that mild and deeply impressive tone which he had so much at command, "Well, nephew, what thinkest thou of all this?" I was so much agitated and confounded at what had passed, and at that moment felt such awe and veneration for my uncle, that I could almost have thrown myself on the ground and wept. The old man seemed also much affected. He embraced me with tears, and, in a broken voice, added,—"Now then, ne-

phew, we may sleep soundly. The ghost will come no more." My uncle was in the right, and as on the following evening all was quiet, our usual cheerfulness and equanimity returned, to the disadvantage, no doubt, of the old Baronesses, who still continued somewhat ghostly in character, yet their spectral attributes were now only diverting instead of appalling, and my uncle did not fail to make the most of them.

CHAPTER II.

At length, after the lapse of several days, the Baron came with his lady and a numerous train of guests and attendants. All at once commenced in the castle that wild mode of life, which had before been described to me. The Baron, however, seemed intent on the charge of his worldly affairs, and came directly after his arrival to our apartments, expressing much astonishment at the change which had taken place in my uncle's lodgings. In particular, he cast a gloomy look at the walled up-door, and, turning from it, drew his hand across his forehead, as if he would drive away some disagreeable and painful recollection. My uncle told him of the complete ruin of the former audience-hall, and its adjoining chambers. The Baron expressed great vexation

that Francis could not provide better for us, and kindly begged the old gentleman to give the necessary orders, in case any inconvenience of our present rooms could be remedied.

On the whole, the behaviour of the Baron towards my uncle was not merely cordial, but marked even with respect and deference; however, this was the only circumstance which I could interpret in his favour, as I could already distinguish that imperious irritable temper, of which I had been previously informed, and which, at every meeting, became more plainly developed. As for myself, I was never honoured with much notice, as he looked on me as a mere clerk or servant of my uncle. Even the very first time, however, that I had attempted to draw up a deed of some importance, he wished to prove that I had been guilty of great inaccuracies. Hereupon, as I knew to the contrary, my blood boiled, and I was about to answer in terms more cutting than were altogether becoming in my situation, when my uncle luckily spoke for me, insisting that I had acted according to his directions, and that he only was responsible for the consequences.

When we were left alone, I complained bitter-

ly of the Baron, to whom my aversion became always more and more rooted. "Believe me, nephew," said my uncle, "the Freyherr Roderick, notwithstanding his unkind manner, is, in reality, a most excellent and benevolent man. His present character, as I have already told you, has only been assumed or acquired since the time that he came into possession of the *majorat*. Before that, he was a modest mild-tempered youth, and, even now, he is by no means so bad in disposition as you would have him to be. On the whole, nephew, I should like to know what good reasons you can have for expressing such violent dislike?"

At that moment, my usual respect and deference towards my uncle were severely tried, for his features assumed an ironical smile, and I felt my cheeks burning with anger. It was impossible, henceforth, that I could disguise from myself the state of my own feelings. I was obliged to own, that my hatred of the Baron had its origin from a very different passion, that is to say, from my having fallen in love with a being who appeared to me the most exquisite and angelic of her sex. This object of my admiration was no less a per-

sonage than the young and beautiful Baroness von Rolandsitten! Even at the moment of her arrival, when she stepped across the court, dressed in a sable fur pelisse, which exactly fitted to the fine symmetry of her shape, and with a rich veil thrown over her head, her appearance struck me at first sight like a spell of enchantment. No doubt, the circumstance of the two aunts, with their indescribable dresses and streaming ribbons, coming tripping along with her, one on each side, and snuffling out their welcome in broken French, added wonderfully to this effect. The Baroness, meanwhile, with the most delightful expression of mildness and good-humour, looked round her, nodding kindly, now to one, now to another of the household, interposing, occasionally, a few German words, in the truest and broadest Courland dialect.

All this was to me unspeakably engaging; but the scene did not fail to revive in my mind the supernatural experiences of our two first nights at the castle. The hobgoblins were well and amply represented by the Baronesses, and the young lady, methought, was like an angel of light, before whose presence the evil spirits must yield

in dismay. Even, at this moment, that truly beautiful girl comes in the most lively colours to my recollection. She was *then* scarcely nineteen years of age. Her countenance was as fine as her form, and wore the most angelic expression of good nature; but, especially in the lustre of her dark eyes, there was an irresistible charm. Like a gleam of dewy moonlight, there shone in them a melancholy kind of passion, while, in her smile, there was concentrated a perfect elysium of delight and inspiration. Oftentimes, however, she seemed absorbed and lost in thought, and, at such moments, dark but transient shadows came over her beautiful features. Most people would have concluded, that she then suffered from some immediate pain; but it rather seemed to me, that gloomy apprehensions of the future weighed on her spirits, and here I found myself brought back again, though I scarcely knew why, to that affair of the abominable ghost by whom we had been haunted.

The following morning after the Baron's arrival, the company assembled to breakfast, where the old gentleman took an opportunity of presenting me to the Baroness. As it usually happens to

persons in my state of mind, I behaved most absurdly, and, in answer to her common-place questions, "how I liked the old castle," &c. I began to talk the most unaccountable and confused nonsense; so that the old aunts ascribed my embarrassment to my profound respect for the noble lady, and thought that they must encourage me by particular condescension, praising me as "*un garçon tres joli.*" This, of course, vexed me; and, recovering my self-possession, I took occasion to come out with some attempt at wit in French, much better expressed, as to language at least, than the old ladies could have pretended to; whereupon they stared at me with great round eyes, and administered to their noses a more than usual supply of brown *rappée.* In the serious look with which the Baroness turned from me to speak with another lady, I observed that my intended *bon-mot* had more than bordered on an absurdity. This annoyed me to an insufferable degree, and I wished the two old ladies at the devil.

As for those paroxysms of visionary love which last but a day or a week, my old uncle had long since, by his ironical remarks, laughed me out of that propensity; but I was quite aware that the

Baroness had made a far deeper impression on my heart than any of which I had yet been susceptible. For the future I only saw and heard her alone, being insensible almost to the existence of any one else around me; and yet to hope for any such thing as a successful amour would, as I well knew, have been utter madness. On the other hand, I could not bear to stand at a distance, and sigh like a love-lorn Arcadian shepherd; but to approach more nearly to this beautiful girl, without even allowing her to guess at my inward feelings,—to drink up the sweet poison of her looks and words, and then, when removed to a far distant land, to bear her cherished image long, and, perhaps, for ever, in my heart,—*this* at least I might do, and I resolved, as far as possible, to carry my plan into effect.

Consequently, the sort of romantic attachment that took possession of my mind, excited my fancy in sleepless nights to that degree, that I was foolish enough to carry on the most pathetic monologues, and inmost lugubrious tones to exclaim, "Celestina! Oh, Celestina!" till at last my old uncle awoke, and called out to me, "Nephew, nephew! I believe thou art dreaming aloud!

Do this in the day-time if it be possible, and in the night be so good as to let me sleep!"

I was not a little afraid that the old gentleman, who had not failed to remark my agitation at the Baroness's arrival, had now heard me pronounce her name, and would afterwards overpower me with his sarcastic wit. However, on the following morning he said nothing farther, except, on entering the audience-hall, "God grant to every one strength and resolution to stick firmly to his own affairs and business in this world! It is a sad thing, nephew, if one allows himself to be changed into a conceited puppy!" Hereupon he took his place at the great table, and added, "Now *write legibly*, I pray you, good Theodore, that I may be able to read afterwards without trouble."

The high respect, nay, almost filial veneration which the Baron entertained towards my uncle, was manifested on almost every occasion. Thus, at the dinner-table, the old gentleman was almost always promoted to the much-envied seat beside the Baroness. As for myself, chance threw me now here, now there, among the guests; but, for the most part, some young officers from the Duke

of Courland's *residenz* got me among them, in order that they might repeat to me all the news they brought from town, and drink stoutly, as I had no particular objection to wine. For many days I sat in this manner, at the under end of the table, quite remote from the Baroness, till, at length, chance brought me into her neighbourhood. When the banquet-hall was opened for the company, the *confidante*, and usual companion of the Baroness, a lady no longer very young, but still handsome and animated, led me into a conversation, in which she seemed to take considerable interest. According to custom, I must offer her my arm, and was not a little rejoiced when she took her place not far from the beautiful Celestina, who welcomed her with a friendly nod. It may be readily guessed, that, whatever I said afterwards, whether it were addressed to my next neighbour or not, was aimed at making a favourable impression on the Baroness. It may have been, that my inward excitement gave an extraordinary liveliness and effect to my discourse, for the Lady Adelaide (this was her name), became always more attentive, till, at last, we were both so completely occupied, that not a word was bestowed by us on the other guests,

though now and then I contrived to excite notice in that quarter where I was myself most interested. I soon observed, too, that Adelaide looked significantly at the Baroness, and that the latter did all she could to catch the tenor of our conversation. This was especially the case, when our discourse turned on music, on which subject I enlarged with great eloquence, finally, not concealing that, in spite of my dry professional studies of the law, I had learned to play the harpsichord with considerable skill; also, that I could sing tolerably well, and had even composed some original airs.

The dinner-party had now broken up, and the guests gone into another room to take coffee and liqueurs. Then, unawares, before I knew how it could have happened, I found myself standing opposite to the Baroness, and even close to her. She was talking with Adelaide, but, on my coming up, immediately addressed me, and, in a tone much more friendly and confidential than at my first introduction, repeated her questions, "How I liked the castle," &c. Hereupon I answered, that, for the first few days, the desolate loneliness of the situation, and the strange old mansion itself, had certainly an

extraordinary influence on my feelings; but that, even in this mood, I had been very happy, being visited by many romantic dreams and fancies. Only the boar and wolf-hunts, with the noise and bustle attending them, were something to which I had never been accustomed, and which, to say the truth, I feared that I should never learn to like. "I can easily suppose," said the Baroness, smiling, "that riding about pell-mell in our wild forests cannot be very congenial to you. You are a musician, and if I am not much mistaken, also a poet? I passionately love both arts, and can play the harp a little. But, when at Rolandsitten, I must dispense with such amusement as well as I can, for the Baron does not choose that I should take with me an instrument, whose soft tones, indeed, harmonize awkwardly enough with the wild shouts and blaring bugles of the chace, which are the only sounds that he thinks should be audible here. And yet, good Heaven! how much would a little real music rejoice my heart at a place like this!"

I assured the Baroness, that I would exert my utmost skill to gratify her wishes, adding, that there must of course be some sort of musical instrument at the castle, if it were only an old spinnet

or untuned piano-forte. At these words, the Lady Adelaide laughed aloud. "You do not know then," said she, "that within the memory of man, there has been no musical instrument at Rolandsitten, except braying trumpets and cracked hunting-horns, with now and then the screaming fiddles, rumbling basses, and shrilling clarionets of itinerant musicians?" The Baroness, however, would not give up her wish for music, and especially to hear me play; so that the two ladies taxed and wore out their invention with proposals and contrivances how a tolerable piano-forte might be had at the castle.

At this juncture of affairs the old *chasseur* Francis happened to make his appearance, tottering through the hall. "There he comes," said Celestina, "he who can give advice in every extremity, and who supplies all our wants, even things before unheard of and unseen!"—With these words she called him towards us, and when he had been made to comprehend what she wished for, the Baroness, with an anxiety more real than affected, clasped her hands, and leant forward as if to catch the voice of an oracle. In this attitude she would have made a fine picture. It was

delightful to behold her expression, like that of an amiable and lovely child who is eager to be put in possession of some long-wished-for toy!— At first Francis brought out several reasons, in his most tedious manner, why he could not at the moment supply an instrument so rare and costly, till, after much circumlocution, he stroked his chin with a facetious smirk, and added, "But the lady stewardess, down yonder in the village, touches the spinnet (or whatever else it is called in the outlandish dialect) with most wonderful skill, and she sings therewith so fine and melancholious, that one never knows whether to laugh or to cry."—"And, in short, then, she possesses a piano-forte?" said Adelaide.—"Aye, to be sure," said the old man, "it came hither directly out of the capital."—"Oh that is admirable!" said the Baroness with rapture.—"It is a fine instrument, no doubt," said Francis, "only a little weakly; for, not long ago, when the organist began to play upon it a marvellous fine piece of music, he knocked it all to pieces, so that——"—"Oh Heavens! so we are to be disappointed at last!" exclaimed the ladies.—"After that," continued Francis, "it had to be taken

with great cost and care to Rothenburg, and there put into repair again."—"Is it returned, then?" said the Baroness.—"Aye, to be sure," answered the *chasseur*, "and the lady stewardess will think herself highly honoured if——"

At this moment the Baron passed by us. He looked as if surprised and dissatisfied at our group; then asked the Baroness sneeringly, "So Francis must again be called into council?"—Celestina blushed deeply, fixing her eyes on the ground, and the *chasseur* assumed the position of a soldier, with his arms close, and his head erect, without daring to utter another word. Thereafter, the ghostly old aunts floated up in their rustling old dresses, and led away their beautiful niece. Adelaide followed, and I was left standing stock-still as if petrified. The rapturous feelings which this chance interview had excited, conflicted in my mind with vexation and gloomy resentment against the Baron, who appeared to me as a barbarous despot. If he were not so, why should the old *chasseur* have assumed a demeanour so timid and slavish? "Theodore, Theodore, canst thou see? Canst thou hear?" said my uncle, tapping me on the shoulder, where-

upon, as if awoke from a dream, I started round and accompanied him to our apartments. "Do not force yourself thus on the attention of the Baroness, nephew," said he; "what good can possibly come of such conduct? Leave these tricks to young idle coxcombs, who think themselves entitled by red coats and blue ribbons, to pay court to rank and beauty, and of whom there is no dearth in the land!" I now related to him circumstantially how the whole affair had happened, and begged him to say, whether I had really deserved reproach? To this, however, he made no other answer, than "Umph! umph!" drew on his *robe de chambre*, seated himself in the arm chair, lighted his pipe, and spoke of the adventures of yesterday's boar hunt, laughing at me because I had so frequently missed in my attempts to hit the game.

In the castle all had now become quiet; for every one was occupied in dressing for the evening assembly. Those itinerants with their screaming fiddles and hautboys, of whom Adelaide had spoken, were arrived; and this night there was to be a regular ball. The old gentleman, who preferred a quiet sleep to such goings on, determined

to remain in his chamber; but I had just finished dressing in my best manner, when a cautious knock was heard at our door, and Francis entered with a facetious grin on his visage, announcing, that the piano-forte of the lady stewardess, was just arrived in a sledge, and was to be taken to the apartments of the Baroness. The lady Adelaide sent her compliments, and begged that I would come over to them immediately.

It may be guessed, how readily, though with a beating heart, I obeyed the summons. It was, indeed, with a most unmanly tremor that I opened the door, and entered the apartment, where I found *her* who was the object of all my solicitude. Adelaide came joyfully to meet me, and the Baroness, already in full dress for the ball, sat, as if lost in reflection, beside the yet silent piano-forte, whose tones it was to be my duty to awaken. She rose at my entrance, beaming in such luxuriance of beauty, that I stood staring at her, without being able to utter a word. "Now, Theodore," said she, (for, according to the pleasant custom of the north, she addressed every one by his Christian name,) "the piano is arrived, and may St Cecilia grant, that the instrument turns out not un-

worthy of the performer!" As soon as I had lifted up the cover, I was saluted by the confused rattling of about a dozen broken strings, and, when I wished to strike a chord, as the few that remained were quite out of tune, the effect was abominable:—"No doubt, the organist, in his gentle manner, must have touched it again," said Adelaide. But the Baroness was seriously vexed. "What a misfortune!" said she; "but it is doomed that I am never to have any real pleasure in this ghastly old house!"

I searched in the drawers, and luckily found some rolls of strings, but no tuning key. Then there were new lamentations. I said, however, that the wards of some other key might perhaps answer. Both ladies ran away, and, in a few minutes, all the moderately-sized keys in the castle were laid before me on the sounding-board. Now, I set to work in good earnest, while the Baroness and Adelaide assisted me, trying every key, till at last one fitted. "It will do! it will do!" cried they, delighted; but, at the first turn, the string broke, and they started back terrified. The Baroness, with her delicate fingers, began to untwist the strings, and reached me each number

as I was ready for it, holding the roll carefully, till I had taken off a sufficient length. Suddenly one of them shrivelled up, and flew away, followed by an impatient "*Ach mein Gott!*" from Celestina. Adelaide laughed aloud.—I followed the ravelled clue to the corner of the room, and we laboured to extract from it one perfect string, which, when tried, again broke, to our great mortification. But, at last, satisfactory rolls were found out. The strings began to keep their places, and instead of vile dissonance, clear musical chords were struck. "Ha! it will do—it will do! Nothing like perseverance!" cried the Baroness, looking at me with an expression of the greatest kindness and gratitude.

How completely did this union of endeavours banish all feelings of ceremonious restraint, which the artificial manners of society impose! The confidential familiarity to which I was now promoted, had given me ample courage, and when the piano was quite in tune, instead of expressing my own melancholy emotions *ad libitum*, as I had intended, I fell into some of those sweet amorous canzonets, which are imported to us from Italy. During this or that, "*senza di te*," or

" *sentimi idol mio,*" or " *almen se non possio,*" interspersed with numberless " *mori me sento's,*" " *addio's,*" and *o dio's,*" Celestina's looks became always brighter and more impassioned. She had seated herself close beside me at the instrument, and unconsciously laid her arm behind me upon the chair. A white ribbon that had disengaged itself from her ball-dress, nestled on my shoulder, and touched me when moved by the gentle sighs of its owner, as if with fluttering wings, a confidential messenger of love! It was wonderful that I retained any degree of self-possession.

When I was thinking of a new song, and had struck some doubtful chords, the Lady Adelaide, who was sitting in a corner of the room, started up, and running to the Baroness, kneeled before her, taking both her hands, and pressing them to her heart,—" Oh dear Baroness," cried she, " dear Celestina, now I shall take no refusal, you must absolutely sing!"—" What are you thinking of, Adelaide?" answered Celestina; " It would be very proper indeed, if I were to make an exhibition of singing such as mine, after the performance of our virtuoso friend there!" It was

now quite delightful to see how, like a modest bashful child, casting down her eyes and blushing, she contended with timidity, and the desire to exert her musical acquirements. It is needless to say that I used every argument, and when she spoke of some trifling *volkslieder*, (popular songs of Courland) I never desisted, till, with the left hand, she tried a few notes as if for a prelude. I wished her to take my place at the instrument, but to this she would not agree, assuring me that her songs, without accompaniment, would of course be meagre and uncertain, and that she was not mistress of a single chord.

At length she began, in a tone clear and mellifluous, like that of the finest church bell, a song which had all the characteristic attributes of the northern popular ballads. The words, indeed, are insignificant, yet, in the melody and words together, we find there is something which irresistibly appeals to the heart. When I accompanied the second strophe of Celestina's chaunt with full harp-like chords, and afterwards, when in the inspiration of the moment, I caught by anticipation, and as if by magical sympathy, the melodies of her other songs, I appeared, no doubt,

in her estimation, and in that of Adelaide, a perfect master of the art, and they overwhelmed me with the most ardent commendations.

The lights of the ball-room, which was in an opposite side of the castle, now shone into our chamber, and an intolerable burst of discordant noise from trumpets and bugle horns, announced that it was time to begin the dance. "Alas! must I go then?" said the Baroness. I started up from the piano-forte. "I am indebted to you for a delightful evening!" added she. "These were indeed the pleasantest moments that I have ever experienced at Rolandsitten." With these words, Celestina gave me her hand, which, in the intoxication of the highest delight, I pressed to my lips. I know not how I took leave and got to my uncle's room, or from thence to the evening party. There is a story of a certain cowardly officer, who pleaded that he durst not go into battle, for, being all heart, the first scratch that he received, must prove mortal. Every youth in my present situation may be compared to that soldier, for the slightest touch was destructive. The vibration of the Baroness's fingers, as I kissed her hand, inflicted a cureless wound, and it

was fortunate that my uncle gave me no law papers to write that evening.

On the following day, without asking any direct questions, the Hofrath soon obained from me the whole history of the preceding night; and I was not a little confounded, when, all at once, from being smiling and jocular, he became very stern and serious. "I must beg of you, nephew," said he, "to resist this demon of folly, that has so powerfully seized upon you. Know, that your present conduct, as innocent as it seems to you, may have deplorable consequences. You are now, in truth, standing upon thin ice, which in a moment may break from beneath you, and you may be plunged into difficulties from which you can never be extricated. May the devil take your music, if you cannot turn it to any better account, than to diddle sensitive young women out of their proper state of repose and contentment!" "But," said I, "where is there any proof of my having even dreamed of such a thing, as an amour with the Baroness?" "Puppy!" said my uncle with great contempt, "if there were any such proof, I would instantly take thee up by the collar, and throw thee out of the win-

dow!" This disagreeable dialogue was fortunately broken by the entrance of the Baron, and for some time I was obliged to give my whole attention to the business of the day.

CHAPTER III.

HENCEFORTH, Celestina did not honour me in company with any particular attention, only now and then interchanging a few friendly words. But there was scarcely a single evening allowed to pass, in which a message was not brought to me from Adelaide, that I should come to her apartments. Our music soon became diversified with much confidential discourse, and Adelaide, who, though no longer very young, had far more *gaieté du cœur* than her friend, enlivened us with all sorts of nonsensical talk, when she perceived that we were becoming too grave or sentimental. From many unequivocal symptoms, I perceived that the Baroness was often liable to depression of spirits and anxiety. I could not help reverting again to my recollections of that fearful spectre, by whom the house was, or had been haunted. Some horrid event must have happened here, or was to happen; and

though I frequently felt impelled to narrate to Celestina my own adventure with the invisible enemy, and the story of my uncle's exorcisms, yet a timidity, to myself inexplicable, fettered my tongue, so that I could not utter a word.

One day, the Baroness failed to appear at the dinner-table. It was said that she was ill, and could not leave her room. Of course, anxious inquiries were made, in return for which, the Baron seemed to me to smile with an expression of bitter irony. "Nothing," said he, "nothing is the matter with her, but a slight catarrh, the effect, forsooth, of our rough sea breezes, that wont suffer any one to have a musical voice, and permit only the hoarse view-hollows of the huntsman!" With these words, I imagined that the Baron threw across to me a most frightful look, and that it was not to his inquisitive neighbour, but at me, that he had spoken. The Lady Adelaide, who sat next me, became red as scarlet. Looking steadfastly at her plate, and scratching on it with her fork, she said, "And yet to day you will meet Celestina!—Her drooping spirits will again be revived by your sweet music!" At that moment, Adelaide's character appeared to me base

and contemptible; and my uncle's warning fell heavily on my heart; for it now seemed as if I were involved in a regular intrigue with the Baroness, which could only end in crime and disgrace. But must I then resolve never to see her again? As long as I staid in the castle, this was impossible, and though I might no doubt leave it, and return to Bernburg, yet I found that I had not resolution to do so. I felt, but too deeply, that I could not give up the love-dreams that had taken possession of me, and yet, in moments of calm reflection, I was half ashamed of my folly; for what had ever happened in those delightful evening hours, that was not reconcilable to the most perfect propriety? I had no proof that the Baroness entertained the remotest feelings of attachment towards me, and yet remained convinced that my situation was hazardous.

The dinner-table was to-day broken up sooner than usual, for there was to be an evening hunt after wolves, who had been seen quite near to the castle. Such amusement was exactly suitable to the state of mind in which I then found myself, and I expressed to my uncle my determination to be of the party. He gave me an approving

nod. "It is well," said he, "that you are for one day willing to go out. I shall stay at home, and you can take my firelock, also my hunting-dagger, which is a very good protection in case of need, provided one retains perfect self-possession."

We had arrived at the appointed station, and the covert, wherein the wolves were supposed to be, was surrounded by the huntsmen. The air was bitterly cold. The wind raged through the fir trees, and drove the snow into my face, so that, as the twilight drew on, I could scarcely see six steps before me. Quite stiffened with the frost, I left the place that had been assigned to me, and went for shelter deeper into the wood. Leaning there against a tree with my firelock under my arm, of course I completely forgot the wolf-hunt, and my thoughts wandered away to Celestina's apartments. After some interval, however, I was roused by the report of fire-arms at a distance; in the next moment there was a rustling in the thickets, and I saw a tremendous wolf in the act of running past. I took aim, fired, but missed. The animal was wounded probably, became ferocious, and with glaring eyes rushed up to attack

me. My life would infallibly have been lost, had I not had sufficient recollection to draw the dagger which my uncle gave me; and as soon as the wolf came up, raging with his mouth open, I plunged it deep into his throat, so that the blood sprang out over my hand and arm. One of the Baron's huntsmen, who had been at no great distance, now made his appearance hilloahing and hooping, so that his shouts collected the whole party around us. The Baron ran up to me in great agitation. "For God's sake," cried he, "what has happened? You bleed—you are wounded?" I assured him of my safety—but he then had recourse to the *chasseur* who had stood next to me, and overwhelmed him with reproaches, because he had not shot after me on perceiving that I had missed. Notwithstanding that the man assured him this was impossible, because he would have run a risk of hitting me as well as the wolf, yet the Baron persisted in his assertions, that he ought to have taken me, as an inexperienced sportsman, under his especial protection.

Meanwhile, the men lifted up the dead animal, which was the largest of its kind ever seen at the castle. Every one admired my courage and re-

solution, although, to say the truth, my conduct was nothing more than natural, and as for the danger in which I had been for a moment placed, I had no time to think of the matter. The Baron, in particular, expressed the greatest interest about my adventure, and there seemed no end to his questions and remarks. We returned immediately to the castle, and on the way, the Baron took me like a friend by the arm, while a chasseur was ordered to carry my firelock. He continued to dwell on my wonderful exploit so long, that at last, I was almost forced to look upon myself as a hero; lost all embarrassment of manner, and found myself established in the Baron's good graces, as a youth of extraordinary courage and resolution. The scholar had stood the ground at his examination,—was no longer a school-boy,—and all the timidity of a tyro had of course vanished from his character. I seemed even to have acquired a sort of right to the favours that Celestina was inclined to bestow on me; for there are no bounds to the absurdities of a young lover, who arranges circumstances, and draws conclusions according to his own fancy.

Returned to the castle, and seated by the fire

over a smoking bowl of punch, I remained still the hero of the day. The Baron was the only one, besides myself, who had killed a large wolf. The rest must content themselves with ascribing their failure to the weather or the darkness, or with narrating tremendous stories of their former exploits in the forest, and the dangers they had encountered. I expected, too, that my uncle would have favoured me with a due share of his applause and admiration. With this view, I related to him my adventure at considerable length, and did not fail to paint the wolf in the most formidable and frightful colours. The old gentleman, however, only laughed in my face, and said, "Providence is powerful even through the weakest implements. A reed may be changed into a destroying sword."

I was going through the corridor into the audience-room, when I saw a figure with a light glide into the apartment before me. It was the Lady Adelaide. "We must thus steal about like ghosts or sleep-walkers, in order to have an interview with you, most heroic hunter of wolves!"—So she whispered, at the same time taking my arm. The words "ghost and sleep-walker," pronounced in

this place, fell heavily on my heart. Involuntarily they brought to my recollection the horrid noises of the first two nights. Now, too, the sea-wind was heard around us in deep hollow moanings. There was a fearful rattling and whistling at the bow-windows, and the moon threw her pale gleams right on that mysterious spot from which the scratching had then been audible. I almost thought that I discerned stains of blood upon the wall!—Adelaide, of course, perceived my consternation. "What is the matter with you?" said she, "you look ice-cold, and pale as a ghost!—Well, I must try whether I cannot call up some signs of animation in these features. Do you know that the Baroness is quite impatient to see you, and, till then, will not be satisfied that the terrible wolf has not inflicted on you some deadly wounds. In short, I have never seen her so much frightened and agitated. You must go with me directly."

I allowed myself to be led in silence. The levity of Adelaide, and her significant glances, displeased me, and I looked on such conduct almost as an insult to the Baroness. When I came into the room, Celestina, with a slight exclamation,

advanced to meet me. Then, as if reflecting, she stood still in the middle of the room, and I ventured to take her hand and press it to my lips. She allowed it to rest in mine. "But, good Heavens!" said she, "is it then any business of yours to meddle with wolves? Do you not know that the times of Orpheus and Amphion are long since passed, and that wild-beasts have long ceased to have any respect even for the most admirable musicians?" This opportune turn of the discourse, by which the Baroness effectually prevented any misinterpretation of the interest which she took, brought me in a moment into the right tone and tact. I know not how it occurred, however, that I did not as usual seat myself at the piano-forte, but took my place next the Baroness on the sofa, where her question, "How, then, did you fall into such danger?" proved that the interview of to-night was to be employed not in music, but in discourse. Of course, I was obliged to narrate my whole adventure in the forest, after which I did not fail to describe the lively interest which the Baron had taken in my behalf, with a slight hint that I could not have thought him capable of such conduct. "How rough and

violent," said Celestina in a melancholy tone, " must the Baron's disposition, no doubt, appear to you! Yet, believe me, it is only when he resides within these gloomy mysterious walls, —only during the season of hunting in the wild pine tree forests, that his whole temper, at least his outward conduct, is thus unfavourably changed. What principally disquiets him is an idea, by which indeed he is almost always haunted, that something horrible will happen here; and, therefore, he has been, even by your adventure, (though no bad consequence has ensued,) deeply agitated. He would not see even the meanest of his servants exposed to danger, much less a highly valued friend; and I am very sure that Gottlieb, the *chasseur*, to whom he gives the blame of having left you in jeopardy, will undergo the punishment, so mortifying to a sportsman, of marching out with only a cudgel in his hand, the next day, and no fire-arms. Even the circumstance, that such wolf and boar hunts are always attended with risk, and yet, that he cannot bring himself to give up the sport, vexes him exceedingly. He thus, as it were, provokes and rouses the demon of mischief whom he fears, and his very ex-

istence is a kind of conflict, of which the evil influence extends also to me. Many strange stories are told of that ancestor by whom the deed of entail was devised; and I well know that some dark family secret, shut up within these mouldering towers, drives away their possessors, and renders it possible, only for a short time, to bear with a residence here,—not without aid from a tumult of mixed company. For the rest, you may suppose how lonely I find myself even in the midst of this bustle, and how that supernatural influence to which you have alluded, and which seems to breathe from the very walls of every chamber, must act upon my feelings. It is in truth to your musical talents, therefore, that I am indebted for the first pleasant hours that I have ever enjoyed in the country. How, then, can I sufficiently thank you for your kind exertions!"

It struck me that this was the proper time to mention more particularly my own experiences, during my two first days at the castle. I said, that, for sometime after my arrival, I had been conscious of a most extraordinary mood of mind, more especially felt, when I sat alone at night in our present audience-hall; but that I could only

ascribe such impressions to the strange fashion of the building, especially its old carved ornaments, aided, no doubt, in their effect by the whistling sea-wind, the rattling casements, and moth-eaten tapestry. It may have been, that, from my voice and manner, the Baroness discovered that more was meant than I had dared to express, for all the while she fixed her eyes doubtfully and earnestly on mine, and, as soon as I concluded, exclaimed with great anxiety.—"No, no!—this is not all!—You have seen something horrible in that room, which I never enter without trembling, and I insist on your telling me the truth!"

Celestina had become deadly pale, and I perceived that it would be better to avoid practising any degree of reserve, as her own imagination might conjure up something far more fearful than whatever I had to describe. She listened to my story with the greatest attention, and every moment her fear and anxiety seemed to increase—when I came to the scratchings on the wall, and the moanings behind it, she almost screamed out, "Horrible—horrible! Yes—it is certain that the direful mystery is concealed in that room!" When I went on explaining how my uncle, by

his exorcisms, or perhaps by a sort of psyco-magnetic influence, had afterwards banished the ghost, she leaned back on the sofa, heaved a deep sigh, and covered her face. Now, for the first time, I noticed that Adelaide had left us. A considerable pause ensued, and my story being ended, I rose up, went to the piano-forte, and, in swelling chords, tried to make a kind of invocation to the spirits of tranquillity and peace, who might deliver Celestina from the gloomy painful reflections which my narrative seemed to have excited. After having played this voluntary, I intoned, as softly and affectingly as I was able, one of the Abbot Steffano's sacred Canzones. During the melancholy sounds of the "*oche, perche piangete,*" Celestina awoke from her reverie, and, with a melancholy smile, and eyes swimming in tears, she listened attentively to my song. For the rest of this interview, all is like a dream. I know not how it happened, but I had thrown myself at her feet; in the next moment I was raised up, and was (or methought I was!) clasped in her arms, and felt a long ardent kiss imprinted on my lips! With a vehement effort of duty, I disengaged myself from her embrace, and ran back to the piano-

forte. My attempts to play, however, were in vain; and when I looked round, the Baroness was standing at some distance in a recess of the window. With a kind of proud dignity, that was otherwise not consistent with her character, she came to me and said:—"Your uncle is the best old man that I have ever known. He is, indeed, the guardian angel of our family, and I wish, sincerely, that he would include me in his pious prayers!"—I was not able to utter a word. The effect of that one kiss was utterly overpowering. Its influence burned and throbbed in every pulse and nerve. The Lady Adelaide returned to the music room. The violence of my inward conflict at length broke out in a passionate flood of tears, which I could not repress, Adelaide looked at me with a smile of irony and astonishment—I could almost have murdered her! The Baroness, however, gave me her hand, and said, with indescribable mildness—"Farewell, my dear friend, do not forget, that perhaps no one ever understood your music better than I have done!—Those sweet tones will long reverberate in my heart!"—I contrived to bring out a few silly unconnected words, and ran away to my uncle's apartments.

The old gentleman had already gone to sleep. I staid for some time in the large room. I fell on my knees and wept aloud. I repeated, over and over, the name of my beloved—"Celestina! Celestina!" in short, gave myself up to all the absurdities of imaginative passion, till, at last, my uncle's voice, in great wrath, recalled me from these dreams. "Nephew," said he, "thou art certainly gone mad,—or art thou engaged once more in single combat with a ravenous wolf?—May I suggest, with all due submission to so great a hero, that it would be better to go to bed? Be so good as to adopt that one rational measure, if thou hast no particular objection."—I directly followed my uncle's advice, but went to rest with the firm resolution to dream only of Celestina. It might be already past midnight, when, not having fallen asleep, I thought I heard distant voices, and the sound of steps running hither and thither, with violent opening and shutting of doors. I listened attentively, and at last was certain that some one approached along the gallery. The door of the great hall was opened, and there was a knocking at that of our apartment. I demanded who was there, and was answered by Francis,

" Herr Justitiarius! Herr Justitiarius! awake, —awake!"—" What in all the world is the matter?" said I; " is there a fire in the castle?" The word " fire" caught the old gentleman's ear, and he started up immediately. " Where is the fire?" cried he; " where is the fire? Are we never to get rest with one devilry or another?"— " Alas! I cannot help it, most worshipful Sir," answered Francis; " but, I beseech you, rise up immediately, for the Baron wishes to speak with you."—" What can the Baron want with the Herr Justitiarius at such an hour?" said my uncle. " Does he not know that law goes to bed with the lawyer, and sleeps along with him!"— " Nay, good Sir," said Francis anxiously, " rise up, I beg it of you. The Lady Baroness is dying!" Hereupon I started up with a cry of horror. " Open the door for Francis," said my uncle composedly; but, almost senseless, I tottered about the room, without being able to find the door or the lock. The old gentleman was obliged to help me. Then Francis came into the room with a pale visage, and lighted the candles.

We had scarcely thrown on our clothes, when the Baron's voice was heard from the corridor,

calling out, "Can I speak with you, my dear Winkler?"—"Coming, coming," my Lord, cried my uncle. "But what need had *you* to dress yourself?" said he to me. "The Baron has not asked for you."—"I must see her once more," said I; "and if she dies, I must die!" These words I pronounced in a hollow tragic tone, as if overcome by grief and despondency. "Aye, so—there you are in the right—that would be quite *comme il faut*, nephew!"—With these words, spoken in a tone of the most contemptuous irony, my uncle left the room, slamming the door after him in my face, and locking it from without. In the first moment, being indignant at this treatment, I intended to burst the door from its hinges; but, reflecting that I should thus only appear like a maniac, I resolved to wait for the old gentleman's return, and then, cost what it would, to escape from his control. Meanwhile, I heard him without, talking vehemently with the Baron in the audience-room, and distinguished my own name frequently repeated, without being able to understand what they said. Every moment my situation became more intolerable. At length, I observed that Francis brought a message to the

Baron, who instantly ran away, and my uncle returned to the bed-room. "She is dead!" cried I, starting up and running towards him. "And thou art a fool!" said he calmly, and forcing me into a chair. "I must go down, and see her," said I, "though it should cost me my life."—"Very proper, nephew," answered he, again locking the door, and putting the key in his pocket. I now stamped with rage, and not knowing what to do, I took a loaded carabine from the wall, and threatened to shoot myself through the head, if he did not instantly open the door. My uncle was at last thoroughly provoked. "Think'st thou," boy," said he, coming up to me, and speaking in his deepest voice, "think'st thou that I am to be frightened by such impertinent threats?—Dost thou believe, that I can set any value on thy life, if, in a paroxysm of childish folly, thou art disposed to throw it away like a plaything? What hast thou to do with the wife of the Baron? What gives thee the right, like a troublesome puppy, to force thyself into a place where thy presence is useless, and where no one desires such company? If the Baroness is in danger, would'st thou forsooth play the part of a

mad inamorato at such a time?" This torrent of unanswerable questions quite overpowered me, so that I laid aside the carabine, and sank into an arm-chair. "And after all," said my uncle, "how canst thou be assured that this illness of the Baroness is not a mere delusion? If her little finger aches, the Lady Adelaide never fails to alarm the whole house; and on this occasion, it unluckily happens that the uproar has extended to the chambers of the old aunts, and they are come out of their dens, screaming and weeping, with a whole canteen of bottles full of Elixir Vitae, Eau de Cologne, strengthening drops, and God knows what. No doubt a tremendous attack of hysterics and fainting-fits——" The old gentleman stopped here, as he perceived my continued agitation. Then, after taking some turns through the room, he placed himself opposite to me, stuck his hands in his sides, and laughed heartily. "Nephew—nephew," said he, "what confounded absurdities have now got possession of thy brain!—Well, it seems as if it could not be otherwise!—The devil diverts himself here in many ways. You have run quite contentedly into his clutches, and he now dances you about at

a fine rate." He walked again up and down—then added,—" It is nonsense to think of sleeping any more. For my part I shall smoke a pipe, and beguile the short interval till morning as well as I can." So saying, he took a Dutch clay pipe from a press in the wall, filled it slowly and carefully from his tobacco-canister, humming a song all the while. Then he looked over a quantity of papers, from which at last he selected one for a *fidibus*, and forthwith began to roll out tremendous clouds. " Now then, nephew," said he, " what was the story of the wolf."

This quiet ironical behaviour of the old man, had a strange influence on my feelings. It seemed, almost, as if I was no longer at Rolandsitten, and that the Baroness was already far from me, so that I could only reach her with my thoughts. My uncle's last question vexed me however. " Do you then find my hunting adventure so very diverting," said I, " and altogether so proper to laugh at ?"—" By no means," answered he, " not at all, nephew. But then you have no notion what an absurd figure a young coxcomb like you cuts, when Providence favours him so far that he encounters something extraordinary and out of

the common course of things. I remember when I was at Göttingen, I had an academical chum, who was a very quiet sensible youth, quite contented with himself and with others, and in no respect remarkable in his conduct. Mere chance, however, brought it about, that he received a challenge, and though he had, on account of his moderation and regularity, been looked upon by his fellow students as somewhat of a milk-sop, he behaved on that occasion with such calm resolute courage, that every one wondered at him. But, after this time he was completely changed. Instead of being a pleasant good-humoured youth, he became a boasting insupportable bully. He went on bragging, roaring, and fighting for the merest trifles, till at last a country man, a farmer, whom he had shamefully insulted, ran him through the heart in a duel. I only tell you the story, nephew—you may apply it or not as you will. But now, as for the Baroness and her illness——" At that moment, steps were heard from the audience-hall, and I imagined that there was a distant sound of moaning and lamentation in the air. " She is dead !" That thought again thrilled and vibrated ice-cold through every nerve.

My uncle rose, and called out, "Frank! Frank!" "Aye—aye—Herr Justitiarius!" answered the *chasseur*, from without. "Frank," said my uncle, "stir up the fire a little—in the great chimney; and prepare for us, if possible, a few cups of good tea. It is devilish cold," added he, turning to me, "so we had better, in my opinion, sit at the hearth in the audience-room, and talk over some old stories." He then opened the door, and I followed him mechanically, without meditating an escape. "How goes it below stairs, Frank?" said he. "Oh," said the *chasseur*, shrugging his shoulders, "it turned out to be nothing of any consequence. The lady Baroness is well again, and ascribes her fainting-fits to a fearful dream." I was going to break out with expressions of great rejoicing. However, a stern look from my uncle, made me quiet. "Well," said he, "since that is the case, it might not be amiss if we laid ourselves down for a little. Let the tea alone Francis."—"As your worship pleases to command," said the polite *chasseur*, bowing low, and then wishing us good night, though the cocks had begun crowing in the court. "Look you nephew," said my uncle, "it is just as well

methinks, that you are still living, notwithstanding your wolf hunts and your loaded carabines?" I now saw through my own folly, and was vexed that I had given him good reason to treat me like a spoiled child.

CHAPTER IV.

"Be so good, nephew," said my uncle, when we awoke pretty late in the morning, "as to step down stairs, and inquire how the Baroness finds herself. You had better ask for the Lady Adelaide, who will supply you with a proper bulletin." It may be supposed how eagerly I hastened away on this errand; but at the moment when I was about to knock softly at the door of her antiroom, the Baron himself came out of it. He stood still as if surprised, and seemed to measure me with a dark doubtful look. "What do you want here?" said he. My embarrassment was great; however, I answered in a tolerably firm voice, that I came by my uncle's orders to inquire for the health of the Lady Baroness. "Oh," said he, "it was nothing. Only one of her usual nervous attacks. She is now asleep; and will of course make her appearance well and cheerful at the dinner-table. Tell him this!" There was a degree of passion-

ate irritation in the Baron's tone when he spoke thus, from whence I drew the inference that he was more concerned about the Baroness than he was willing to allow. I turned from him, intending to make my escape immediately; but hereupon with rather a fierce look, and the words, "I have something to say to you, young man!" he detained me. At that moment, it seemed as if I beheld before me a deeply injured husband, and I expected a scene fraught even with terrific consequences. I knew not whether he would not poinard me on the spot as a sacrifice to his resentment; but though not otherwise armed, I remembered that I had my uncle's hunting dagger, which I had carried in my pocket ever since the adventure of the wolf. With these thoughts, I followed the Baron, who led me from thence into his own room, of which he closed the door behind him. He then walked up and down through the apartment,—at last stood with his arms crossed, and repeated, "Young man, I have a few words to say to you." I had wound myself up to desperate resolution, and replied, "I trust they may be words which I can hear without resenting, and that I shall return a satisfactory answer." The Baron stared at me with

astonishment, as if he had not rightly understood what I said. Then he looked gloomily on the ground, put his hands behind him, and resumed his pastime of walking up and down through the room, till at last he took down a firelock, and struck the ramrod into it, as if to prove whether or not it was loaded. I thought his design was to shoot me, and the blood boiled in my veins with indignation; at the same time I went up so closely, that it would have been impossible for him to take aim at me. "A handsome firelock," said the Baron calmly, and setting it again into the corner. I retreated some steps backward. "Theodore," said he, giving me a slap on the shoulder, "no doubt you think that I am quite confused and disturbed, and truly I am so from the anxieties of my last sleepless night. My wife's nervous attack was not dangerous;—of that I am fully aware; but then *here*, in this castle which is haunted and domineered over by an evil spirit, I always fear that some horrid misfortune may occur:—besides it is the first time that she has been indisposed at Rolandsitten, and *you* alone bear the blame of all this!" "How this can be possible," said I, "I have not the most remote idea"—"Nay," said the Baron

" if that damned rattling piano-forte of the steward's wife had been broken in a thousand pieces, I should have been happy;—or if you—— But no, no! it was to be, and must be so; and perhaps I am myself to blame for all. At the time when you began your music in my wife's apartments, it was my duty to have made you acquainted with her state of mind and temper." Here he paused, and I was about to speak; but he immediately resumed, " Nay, nay, let me go on, for I must prevent you from drawing any rash conclusions. You probably look upon me as a rough severe man, who cannot endure either music or poetry—in short, a decided enemy of the fine arts. But an inward and deeply founded conviction obliges me to forbid the introduction of musical instruments and concert parties in this castle; for there are minds which, in certain situations, cannot thrive with such indulgences. To this remark, I myself am not an exception; but as for the Baroness, she is the victim of morbid sensibility, which in the end will probably destroy all the happiness of her life. During our residence within the gloomy walls of Rolandsitten, she is never for a moment free from that state of excitement and irritability, which in

Courland occurs but seldom, but which is there generally the forerunner of serious illness. You may then ask, and with reason, why should I bring my wife into such a gloomy and spectral mansion, or introduce her into the confused assemblage of a hunting party? Call it weakness, however, or what you will, but, in short, I cannot bring myself to leave her behind me alone. I should then be tormented by a thousand fantastic fears; for it is but too true that the same low spirits and horrid presentiments by which she is affected, have too often haunted me also, more especially when I am in the dark forests of Rolandsitten, or in the present audience-chamber. Yet, in some respects, I think that to one who suffers from low spirits and nervous agitation, the mode of life which we lead here should operate like a powerful tonic. The wild north wind that roars through the old fir-trees,—the baying of the dogs, the bold crashing notes of our trumpets and hunting-horns ought to triumph over the childish tinkling of the pianoforte, which, at all events, is not an instrument for a man to play upon. But you seem determined to persist in that plan, which is, above all, the most likely to drive my wife to utter distraction!" These strange words the Baron pronounced in

a changed voice, and his eyes gleamed with anger. I was again ready to speak, and in a tone scarcely less vehement than his own; but he resumed, "I know all that you would say. Though your confounded music is the cause of my wife's present illness, yet I do not by any means accuse you of bad intentions, though you must of course expect that I shall put an end to such goings on. But when her imagination is excited to the utmost degree by your cursed songs and fantasias, then, all at once, you crush her spirit down into the very lowest abyss of gloomy apprehensions, by a frightful story of hobgoblins that have been playing their pranks with you in the audience-hall. Now, as I am not less interested in that matter than the Baroness, I must trouble you, Theodore, to relate to me circumstantially what really happened to you there."

I now recollected myself, and described my adventure as minutely as possible, to which the Baron listened with great attention, interposing only now and then a few words indicating his astonishment. When I came to that point where my uncle undertook to exorcise the ghost, and seemed, by dint of a few resolute words, to have ba-

nished him for ever, the Baron clasped his hands with great emotion, and exclaimed,—" Aye, truly,—your uncle is indeed the guardian and protector of this family, and I respect him far more than any relative whom I have ever known !" When I had finished, he kept walking up and down the room, murmuring over to himself the words—" Daniel—Daniel, what art thou about here at such an hour ?" I thought it was time for me to retire. " So, then, my Lord," said I, " the Baroness is now out of danger ?" He started as if from a dream, took me by the arm, and said, " Nay, my young friend, she must derive her perfect recovery from the same source which was the cause of her illness. You alone are qualified to be her physician." I felt myself blush deeply, and had I been placed before a mirror, should certainly have seen in it the reflection of a very foolish physiognomy. The Baron seemed diverted with my anxiety, and looked at me with a most ironical expression. " How is it possible," said I, " that I can be of any service ?"—" Well,—well," said the Baron, " it is sufficient that I am contented to have recourse to your medical art in the first place, and

your patient, if I mistake not, is not very formidable or difficult to deal with. She has already been drawn into the enchanted circle of music and romance, and to tear her all of a sudden out of it again, would be both hazardous and cruel. Therefore you may continue your performances, and in the evening hours you will always be welcome in my wife's apartments. But then you must completely change the tone and style of your sonatas, or whatever else they are called. Choose only such compositions as are at once bold, cheerful, and energetic. Repeat also your story of the ghost freely, as often as she recurs to the subject, but in such manner that she may rather look on it as as an absurd fable, such as one reads in a romance or children's book, than any horrid supernatural occurrence. At last, perhaps, she will get familiarized to this castle spectre, and will laugh at what she now so much dreads. Do this, my young friend, and by attending to these directions, you may be assured of my good opinion and favour."

The Baron then retired, and left me quite confounded, and as if annihilated by what had passed. A few minutes before, I had been apprehensive of his anger and resentment, for my con-

science was not free from self-reproach. But that conviction of guilt was attended by a certain feeling of complacency and self-importance. On the contrary, I now saw myself treated like an insignificant and foolish child, who believes the paper crown which he has stuck on his head to be made of genuine gold. Madman that I was, to suppose that I could be an object of jealousy in the mind of the Baron! He himself sends me to Celestina, and treats me like a mere automaton—like a senseless implement, which he can use or throw away at his pleasure. Under the influence of these mortifying reflections, I hastened to my uncle's apartment. "Where have you staid so long, nephew?" said he. "What has been the matter?"—"I have spoken with the Baron," said I, in a low voice, and without daring to look up at him. "*Tausend sapperlot!*" cried the old gentleman, feigning astonishment, "the Baron, no doubt, has challenged you, nephew?" This irony he accompanied with a most hearty fit of loud laughter, which proved how completely he had all along seen through and despised my folly. I bit my lips with anger, and durst not answer a word, for I knew that if I did

so, I should only bring on myself a torrent of ridicule.

The Baroness made her appearance at dinner in an elegant white morning dress, looking tenfold more beautiful and seductive than ever. Her voice from languor was yet more melodious, while her eyes, and the faint blush on her cheeks, had more than ever of amatory and voluptuous expression. But, what bounds can be set to the absurdities of a young man, whose imagination (as it often happens,) has outgrown his reasoning faculties? The anger which my conversation with the Baron had excited, now transferred itself even to Celestina. All her conduct towards me seemed like a malicious trick and delusion; and I now imagined myself to be so wondrous wise, that I could penetrate every veil, so that no one could turn me into an object of ridicule again. I therefore avoided both the Baroness and Adelaide, who, as usual followed me, and secured my place at the bottom of the table, between two young officers, with whom, in order to dissipate my chagrin, I drank a good deal of wine. By the time the dessert was set on the table, they, as usual, were very noisy, but I was much more

merry and vociferous than either of them. At this time, a servant brought me a plate of *bon bons*, with the words "from the Lady Adelaide." On looking them over, I observed, that on one of them was scratched with a pencil, "and Celestina." My whole feelings underwent an instantaneous revolution. I looked towards Adelaide, who took up her glass, and nodded to me, with a significant smile. Almost involuntarily, I murmured to myself, "Celestina!" and drank at the same time a long glass of wine. On looking up the table, I perceived that the Baroness had drank at the same moment, and was looking at me, so that our eyes met. Some demon delighting in mischief, whispered to me at that moment, "Too happy youth! She still loves thee!" Just then, one of the party rose, and, according to northern custom, proposed the health of the lady Baroness. Then there was a joyous ringing of glasses, and tremendous shouts of applause. This toast completely overcame any remains of rationality which I had left, and it was fortunate that the party then rose and dispersed, for I had formed some scheme of throwing myself at the Baroness's feet, before all the company, and declar-

ing my unalterable devotion and attachment. "What the devil is the matter with you, my good friend?"—This question, from one of the young officers, brought me to my recollection; and I found that Celestina had vanished. I wished to retire, but Adelaide came up to me, and talked a great deal in her usual lively manner, of which I was no longer capable of understanding one sentence; so that of course I made no answer. Pretending to think that I was deaf, she then took me by the arm, and shouted into one ear, but without better effect. The room turned round with me in circles, and the last circumstance that I remember of this interview, was, that I mechanically took a glass of liqueur which Adelaide offered me, after which, I found myself standing alone at a window. Being thus at liberty, I rushed out of the banquet-hall, ran down stairs, and made my way from the castle into the forest. The weather was most uninviting; for the snow fell in thick flakes, and the fir-trees groaned and sighed as they were waved by the wind. I was for some time completely mad; danced, laughed, and roared aloud, believing that the devil had got possession of me; and

there is no saying how this fit of delirium would have ended, had I not heard my name several times shouted out through the wood, which brought me again to some degree of rational reflection. The snow-storm had now ceased, and the moon shone bright through the broken clouds. I heard the barking of dogs, and was aware of a dark form approaching me. It was the old *chasseur*. "Nay, good master Theodore," said he, "how have you contrived to wander out so far in the thick snow-drift? The *Herr Justitiarius* had been asking for you, and is waiting with great impatience."

Without speaking, I quietly followed the old man; for the intoxication produced by a few glasses of Champagne, though violent, is not of long continuance, and its effects now began to decline. I found my uncle at work among his papers in the audience-hall. "You have done very well nephew," said he, "to go into the free air, and cool yourself. But, in future take care not to drink so much wine; thou art far too young to require such indulgence, and it will not agree with thee!" Still, I did not venture to speak a word, but seated myself at the writing-

table as quietly as possible. After a pause my uncle said, "But in sober earnest, nephew, I should like to know what the Baron said to you this morning." I repeated to him all that had passed, adding, that I would by no means undertake the strange method of cure which the Baron had proposed. "It would never do at any rate, nephew," said my uncle, "because we are to set out to-morrow morning on our return to Bernburg." It happened, of course, as my uncle had said, and I never beheld Celestina more!

As soon as we arrived in town, my old uncle complained that he felt himself more than ever fatigued by his laborious journey. His sulky discontented silence, diversified only by violent fits of ill humour, announced the return of his old enemy the gout. Worse consequences ensued, however, for one day I received a very urgent summons to his room, where I found him labouring under a shock of palsy, and holding a letter in his hand, which he had convulsively crumpled together. I recognized the handwriting of the steward at Rolandsitten, but, deeply afflicted, I did not venture to take the letter out of the old man's hand, for I thought that he was in the

agonies of death. But, even before the physician arrived, his pulse again beat firmly and freely. His strength and spirit, even at that advanced period of life, conquered the disease, and on the same day the physician declared that he was out of danger. The winter, that year, was severer than ever, and was followed by a rough and gloomy spring—and, in consequence of this, he suffered from a long and violent fit of the gout. At this time he resolved, that, for the future, he would withdraw himself from all cares of serious business, so that there could be no chance of my being again taken with him to Rolandsitten. My uncle would have no attendance during his illness but mine; and depended on me during his confinement for conversation, reading, &c. But, even in his cheerfullest hours, when he did not fail to indulge in his old vein of irony, and I expected that he would have recourse to my old adventure of the wolf, or to my absurd fancies about the Baroness, as the theme of his wit, he never once alluded to Rolandsitten, and, of course, I had my own reasons for not directly leading him to the subject. My anxiety, indeed, on account of the old gentleman's severe illness, had quite

banished the image of Celestina. But, as he got better, I thought again with more liveliness of those delightful hours spent in her presence—of which the influence (as an astrologer would say) was like that of some brilliant star risen on my existence, and which had set, never to rise again. However, an event which now occurred to me, though in itself trifling, revived all the pain which I had before felt, and filled me with as much horror as if I had been met by the most awful visitant from the world of spirits. One evening I happened to open the travelling portefeuille, which I had used when at Rolandsitten; and there fell out of the papers a lock of dark hair, bound with a white ribbon, which I immediately recognized for that of Celestina. Now, as I contemplated the ribbon more narrowly, I perceived on it the mark of a drop of blood! According to popular superstition, this was an unequivocal proof that the Baroness was no longer in life, but had died some frightful and violent death. Though the finding the lock of hair among my papers was unexpected, yet I could easily suppose that Adelaide, perhaps on that day of my absurd delirium, had contrived to place it among my papers,

or in my pocket, whence I had taken it unawares, when I packed up my letters next morning before our departure. But for the fearful warning of her untimely fate I could contrive no satisfactory explanation. It was, by the bye, the identical ribbon that had waved and played round me, on the first night when I had sat beside the Baroness at the piano forte, which had now brought to me this mysterious intimation of her death.

At last the rough tempestuous weather of the spring season drew to an end, and summer asserted her rights. If the cold before was insupportable, the heat of July became almost equally disagreeable. However, the old gentleman's health visibly improved, and he went as usual to his garden-house in the suburbs of Bernburg. It happened that one beautiful quiet evening we were seated together in a fragrant arbour of jasmine, vines, and honeysuckle. My uncle was unusually cheerful; but at the same time not ironical and sarcastic—on the contrary, rather mild and affectionate in his humour. "Nephew," said he, "I know not how it happens that I am better to-day than I have been for a long time, and yet I believe that this feeling is but the forerunner of my

speedy death." I endeavoured to reason him out of this fancy, but in vain. "Never mind it, nephew," said he, "It is most certain that I cannot remain long in this world, and before leaving it, I would wish to fulfil one duty which I owe towards you. Do you still think sometimes of the autumn spent at Rolandsitten? It was your lot to encounter some strange scenes on entering that mansion, and, without any will of your own, to be involved in the deepest mysteries of the family. Now the time has come, when you may receive a full explanation of circumstances, which you could before scarcely guess at. Nature, good Theodore, affords, by the alteration of the four seasons, a symbolical representation of human life. This is a trite remark; but I am inclined to draw a conclusion from this parallel which is not so common. The spring no doubt brings its flowers and May mornings, but is too often diversified with cold hail-showers and a wintry sky. The summer has its hot burning noons, vapours, and thunder storms; but it is invariably from the pure ether and golden sun-light of autumn, that the landscape is seen to most advantage. In like manner, methinks, the eyes of old age, before

our mortal life sinks into the wintry night of death, are best able to scrutinize the otherwise concealed workings of those dark powers, to whose influence we are in this life subjected. Freed from earthly passions, and hovering on the brink of eternity, we are then granted by anticipation glimpses into the spiritual world. How clear at this moment lies before my mind's eye the destiny of that house, to which from early life I became attached by bonds firmer than those which mere relationship can tie! Yet I cannot impart my own perceptions to you, because words are not capable of expressing them. Listen, however, to what I shall now tell you, as a memorable history, in which there is nothing that is improbable or incomprehensible; and you will perceive, by the way, that the circumstances into which you were drawn, might very possibly have worked your utter destruction. But that danger is now past."

The history of the Rolandsitten *Majorat*, which the old man now related to me, made so deep an impression, that I am able to repeat it almost in his own words. It is to be observed, that he spoke of himself in the *third* person.

CHAPTER V.

In a stormy autumnal night of the year 1770, the servants at Rolandsitten were awoke by a most tremendous crash, as if the whole castle had fallen into ruins. In a moment every one started up; they rushed out with lights in their hands, and the old steward, panting with terror and rattling his keys, led the way. They set to work opening every door and traversing every gallery, to find out where the misfortune had occurred; but all was now silent as the grave, and their astonishment was beyond measure, to find that every room, hall, and corridor, was perfectly uninjured. No where could be found the slightest trace of devastation. A dark apprehension, however, now seized on Daniel the old steward. He went up once more into the great hall, which had a small cabinet adjoining, where the Baron Roderick used to sleep, when he had been occupied with

his astronomical observations. There were two doors in the wall of this large apartment, leading to bed-rooms, and between them was a kind of iron gate, through which one entered on the narrow spiral staircase to the watch-tower. This gate Daniel now tried to open, and as soon as he succeeded, a terrific blast of wind came against him, that blew out his candle, and brought a load of loose rubbish and stones about his head. One step farther would have been his last, for the gateway now only led to a bottomless chasm, from which he recoiled with horror. "God of Heaven!" cried he, "the Baron then must be dashed to pieces!" At that moment he heard lamentations from the other servants who had gone into the bed-room; and on joining them, he found them busied about the dead body of their master. Completely dressed and in his best attire, he was sitting up in his arm-chair, with a quiet gravity on his undisfigured countenance, as if he had been reposing after the fatigues of severe study. It was, however, the repose of death!—On the following day, they discovered that the crown-like roof of the tower had fallen in;—the large square stones of which it was composed, had struck through the floors beneath,

carrying with them also a heavy iron balcony, and altogether acquiring such force, that the narrow passage and staircase, with a portion of the castle wall, had been completely torn away. One durst not advance a single step through the gateway from the hall, without the danger of falling down at least eighty feet into a frightful abyss.

The old Baron, though this was unknown to the servants, had prophecied his own death, even to the very hour; and had sent intelligence of this coming event to his sons. Consequently, it happened that, on the very next day, Wolfgang, Baron von Rolandsitten, eldest son of the deceased, and now lord of the *majorat*, arrived at the castle. Not doubting in the least that the old astronomer's predictions would be fulfilled, he had, on receiving the letter, immediately left Vienna, where he happened to be at that time, and come as rapidly as possible to Rolandsitten. The house-steward had by this time hung the great hall with black, and laid out the deceased Baron, on a magnificent state-bed, in his clothes, just as he had found him. Wolfgang walked silently up stairs into the hall, and advanced close to his father's corpse, where he remained for some time gazing at the pale visage,

contracting his eye-brows with a fixed gloomy expression. He stood like a statue, without the least emotion of grief, nor a vestige of tears in his eyes. At length, with an almost convulsive motion, stretching out his right arm over the body, he murmured in a hollow voice, "Didst thou hold communication with the stars, and with supernatural powers, in order to bring misery on the son whom thou shouldst have loved?" Then raising his hands, and looking upwards, in a depressed faltering tone, he added, "Poor foolish old man! The farce of life, with its absurd deceptions, is now over, and thou art aware by this time how vain were thy narrow-minded and avaricious toils! What power or volition can extend its limits beyond the grave?" After a gloomy pause, he cried out with great vehemence, "No—not a single scruple of my earthly happiness, which thou wouldst have utterly annihilated, shall be taken from me by thy obstinate and perverse resolves!" With these words, he drew from his pocket a folded paper, and held it to one of the candles that were placed round the bed. The paper, whatever were its contents, flamed up rapidly, and as the flickering light fell upon the corpse, it seemed as if its

muscles heaved and quivered, and the by-standers insisted that they heard certain inarticulate words, so that they were seized with unutterable horror. The Baron, however, quietly fulfilled his purpose, and, letting the last morsel of the manuscript fall out of his fingers, trod it vehemently upon the floor. He then threw another ghastly frowning look on his father's remains, and hurried out of the room.

On the following day, Daniel formally made the Baron acquainted with the late devastation of the watch-tower, describing every circumstance that had occurred on the mysterious night of his father's death, concluding with an earnest request that orders might immediately be given to have the tower repaired, as, in case of its tottering ruins falling a second time, the whole castle might be endangered. "What?" cried the Baron in a voice of great wrath, "thou wouldst have me repair the watch-tower? Never—never!—Dost thou not perceive, old dotard, that, unless meddled with, it cannot fall any more than it has done,—and what if my father had wished for its destruction, and contrived means of bringing it down whenever he pleased? But let that be as it may. If the whole castle

were in ruins, it is nothing to me. Dost thou suppose that I would be content to live in this cursed old nest for bats and owls? No—no! That wise ancestor who laid the foundations of a new castle in the valley, has set a good example, which I shall not fail to adopt."—"So, then," said Daniel, "your old faithful steward also must needs take the pilgrim's staff, and depart?" "That I shall not be attended by helpless old drivellers like thee," said the Baron, "is very certain. But, at the same time, I shall not turn any one out of doors. Thou canst not, and needst not work; but I shall give thee bread out of charity."—"Indeed," said Daniel, "have I then so regularly fulfilled all my duties up to this hour in the castle, and am I become all at once so utterly useless?" The Baron then suddenly turned round with his face flushed, and his eyes glaring with anger. Clenching his fist, and in a frightful tone,—"Thou vile hypocritical old villain," said he, "who has so long carried on thy devilish trade of spells and incantations in the tower yonder, laying thyself like a vampyre to my father's heart, and inspiring him perhaps with those hellish resolutions that brought

me to the brink of destruction, I ought indeed to drive thee out of my house like a mad dog!" The old man was so terrified at these words, that he fell on his knees before the Baron, and whether it happened intentionally, or in the insensible paroxysm of anger, is not known, but the Baron gave him a blow with his foot, which overturned him on the floor. With difficulty he raised himself up, and uttering a strange moan, more like that of some wounded beast, than a man, he cast on the Baron a look of mingled rage and despair. The latter threw at him a heavy purse of money, but, leaving it untouched, he retired without another word.

Meanwhile all the nearest connections and acquaintances of the family assembled, and the old magician was with much pomp interred in the family vault, after which, when the guests had departed, the new Baron seemed resolved to be both wise and merry. He applied himself earnestly to the management of his worldly affairs, looking over the accounts which were rendered to him by the family agent Winkler, (whom he confirmed in his office,) and considering how much of the yearly income could be laid aside for the build-

ing of the new castle. Winkler told him that it was, in his opinion, quite impossible that the last Baron could have spent, or even nearly spent *all* his income, adding, that as nothing more than a few bank notes, and about a thousand dollars had been discovered, there must certainly be a treasure concealed somewhere about the castle. Of course the only person who could afford information as to this was old Daniel, and according to his usual wayward temper, perhaps he merely waited to be questioned, before giving the required explanation. Baron Wolfgang, however, was not a little afraid that Daniel, out of revenge for the insult that he had received, might refuse his assistance, and described to Winkler the scene that had taken place betwixt him and the steward, expressing at the same time his conviction, that it was this man alone who had excited in Baron Roderick's mind, that harshness and aversion towards his sons, which, in his estimation, was so unpardonable. Winkler, however, did not believe this, and insisted that the late Baron was by no means of a temper to be led or influenced by any one in such matters. Finally, he undertook to learn

immediately from the steward, whether money was or was not concealed in the castle.

There was no need for doubt or deliberation on that score, for no sooner had the Justitiarius proposed his first question to Daniel, than the latter answered it with the utmost readiness. "How comes it that the Baron has left behind him so little ready money?" said Winkler. "Are you talking of the trifling handful of dollars that you found in the secretaire?" answered the steward. "That would indeed be but a poor affair to reckon on. The rest lies in a small vaulted closet, adjoining to the bed-room of the late Baron. But the worst of the story is;" (here twisting his features into an abominable grin,) "the worst is, that many thousand pieces of gold are buried yonder in the rubbish of the watch-tower!" Having obtained this much of information, the Justitiarius immediately called the Baron, and they went, accompanied by Daniel, to the bed-room. Here, the latter shoved aside an oaken pannel of the wall, and a lock became visible. The Baron instantly pulled out his great bunch of keys, fell down on his knees to prosecute his labour with better effect, and tried them all one after another.

Daniel, meanwhile, drew himself up, proud and stately, looking with an aspect of the most ineffable contempt at his master. The Baron laboured in vain, for no key would fit. At last, with a faltering voice, and deadly pale visage, the steward said, "If I am a dog, my lord Baron, I have at least the fidelity of a dog to recommend me!" With these words, he handed a small silver key to his master, who snatched it eagerly out of his hands, and with it immediately opened the lock. Through a small aperture, that could scarcely be called a door, they then forced their way into a low vaulted closet, where there was a large iron box, with the lid thrown open, and displaying a great load of money-bags, upon which there lay a written paper, in the well-known old fashioned hand of the late Baron.

"ONE hundred fifty thousand rix dollars, in Fredericks d'or,—money saved from the rents of Rolandsitten,—and this sum is destined for the improvement of the family mansion. Besides, the possessor of the *majorat* who follows me, shall, upon the high hill eastward from the watch-tower, (which he will find in ruins,) build a stately light-house for

the good of the mariners, and kindle a fire in it every night.—Rolandsitten, Michaelmas day, 1770.

RODERICK, FREYHERR v. ROLANDSITTEN."

The Baron lifted up the money-bags one by one, and let them fall again into the chest, delighting himself with the ringing sound of so much *argent comptant*. He then turned to the old steward, thanked him for his fidelity, and assured him, that nothing but vile calumnies had been the reason why he had before treated him so harshly. For the future he should not only remain in the castle, but be confirmed in full authority as house-steward, with double income.—"I owe you much," added the Baron, "as compensation for the insult that I have inflicted on you. If you want money, here,—take one of these bags." He did not look the steward in the face as he pronounced these words, but rather kept his eyes on the ground, at the same time pointing to the chest, to which he soon betook himself again, counting over the bags, as if to guess whether all was right. The pale face of the steward was suddenly overspread with a burning red, and

he uttered the same kind of horrid unearthly moan, which the Baron had described to his friend Winkler. The latter was, however, much shocked on the present occasion; for, along with that strange noise, he thought he distinguished two or three articulate words of fearful import, of which, however, the Baron took no notice, for he was too much engrossed by the contemplation of the treasure before him. Daniel, meanwhile, seemed conflicting with his own feelings, which he wished to disguise, from the necessity he was under of appearing, if possible, grateful and respectful towards the Baron. He trembled in every limb, as if seized by an ague fit, but forced himself to go through the customary ceremonies of a favoured servant. He drew near in the humblest manner, kissed the Baron's hand, then, in a melancholy tone—"Alas, my Lord," said he, "what should I do with money, a frail old man who has neither wife nor child to provide for? However, as to the offer of double wages, I thankfully receive your gracious offer, and shall not fail to discharge, as long as I live, the duties of my station here in the castle!" The Baron paid not the slightest attention to this acknowledgment of the steward, but threw down

the lid of the money-chest with such force, that the vaulted roof echoed. He then carefully locked the coffer, and said hastily,—" Well—well—enough of that. But," added he, as they came into the hall—" did you not speak of much treasure, that lies buried in the rubbish of the tower ?" The old man made no answer, but stepped silently to the iron-gate, which he opened with much labour, but as soon as he had done so, the storm brought a thick blinding snow-drift into the room. What was worse, a large raven came forth, croaking and screaming, and flew about the hall, beating with its black wings against the windows,—till, finding out the gateway again, it disappeared at once into the chasm. The Baron went to the gate, and looked down, but had scarcely given one glance, when he came back trembling. " It is a frightful sight ! I am quite giddy !" said he, and sank, half fainting, into the arms of his friend the Justitiarius. He recovered himself, however, and with a sharp look at the old man—" And in the ruins below there," said he, " thou knowest that there are yet treasures ?" The old man had now closed the gate, and strained, with all his might, to draw out the key from the lock, but

it was grown so rusty, that this was almost impossible. At length, having accomplished the task, he turned slowly round to the Baron, and said, with a hideous grin on his features, " Aye, aye ! down there lie thousands and thousands of them ! All the beautiful instruments of your honoured father ! Telescopes, quadrants, mirrors, and what not ! all are mouldering in rubbish, among the stones, and wooden beams !"—" But money—money !" said the Baron. " You spoke of gold, old man !" " I only meant," said Daniel, " rarities that had cost many a Frederick d'or." And this was all that could now be gathered from him.

The Baron seemed for some time quite contented, and rejoiced at having obtained the means of carrying his favourite plan of building a new castle into execution. Winkler was, indeed, of opinion, that the careful astrologer, in his testamentary memorandum, alluded only to repairs of the old castle, and that it would not be an easy matter for them to erect any building that would equal it in size and grandeur. The Baron, however, was inflexible, and insisted, that in the case of such irregular and unrecorded wills, the arrangements proposed by the deceased must yield, *ad*

libitum, to the modifications of the living. He made it known, at the same time, that it was his especial duty to adorn Rolandsitten as far as climate, soil, and environs would permit, for he intended, in a short time, to bring home a wife, so lovely, and so beloved, that, for her sake, he ought to make every sacrifice.

A certain air of mystery, however, attended this *annonce*, which made the Justitiarius think, that perhaps the marriage had already been solemnized in secret; but he did not venture to ask any more questions. Meanwhile, the circumstance was in one respect satisfactory to him, for he had before accused the Baron of avarice, but, on the contrary, his craving for money seemed to originate in the wish to give pleasure to a dearly beloved object. Still it vexed him to perceive that the lord of the majorat, though now in possession of so much ready money, which he did not fail to visit every day, and look at with the greatest pleasure, should very often grumble out—"That old scoundrel has certainly concealed, somewhere or another, the largest treasures, but, next year, the ruins of the tower shall be cleared out under my own inspection."

Now there came architects, with whom the Baron held long discussions, how it would be best to proceed with the new building. Drawing after drawing was tabled and rejected. No style of architecture was for him sufficiently grand, rich, and elegant. At last he began himself to draw plans, and, exhilarated by this employment, which always afforded him pleasant anticipations for the future, he gradually brought himself into a mirthful humour, which almost bordered on extravagance, and in which, by means of his liberal entertainments, he found no want of people to sympathize with him. The profusion and frequency of his banquets, indeed, soon cleared him from every imputation of avaricious parsimony. Daniel, meanwhile, appeared to have quite forgotten the insult which had been inflicted on him. Towards the Baron, he behaved himself always humbly and respectfully, though the former, on account of the treasure which he supposed the steward to have concealed, either in the ruins of the tower, or somewhere else, often followed him with mistrustful glances. But what appeared to all persons most extraordinary, was, that the old man's looks improved from day to

day in a wonderful degree, so that he seemed actually ten years younger. Perhaps this might be, because he had begun to forget his grief for his old master's death; partly, too, because he was not now obliged to spend whole nights sleepless in the tower, and, moreover, enjoyed a better table, and as much wine as he liked to drink. However this may be, it is certain that, from being a tottering withered scarecrow, he became a portly man, with florid cheeks, who looked the very picture of health, and could laugh long and loudly whenever there was the least indication of jocularity around him.

This mode of life at the castle was interrupted by the arrival of a personage, who, from his gay careless demeanour, might been judged to be exactly suited for an inmate of the modern Roland-sitten. This was Wolfgang's younger brother, the Baron Hubert. But no sooner was he announced to the lord of the *majorat* than the latter grew deadly pale, and, to the astonishment of the by-standers, cried out, "Unhappy wretch! what new madness can have brought him hither?" Hubert, on the contrary, came into the room with liveliness and affection in his countenance, and

would have cordially embraced his brother. Wolfgang, however, received him with great coldness, and led him away afterwards to his private study, where the two were long closeted together. The interview lasted for several hours, till at length Baron Hubert came down with a very perturbed aspect, and called for his horses. The advocate Winkler met him on the staircase, and, imagining that perhaps he might be able to clear up some dispute between the two brothers, he begged of the younger Baron that he would remain for some time longer at the castle. At that moment, too, the lord of the *majorat* appeared, and called out, "Stay—stay Hubert! In a little while, you will recollect yourself, and think better of all these matters!" Hubert's looks cleared up in some measure. He assumed an air of composure, threw off his rich fur cloak, and gave it to a servant,—then taking Winkler's arm, walked with him up and down the chamber. Perceiving that they were left alone, he at length said with a scornful smile, "So, forsooth the lord of the *majorat* has the condescending kindness to allow of my remaining here *for a little while*?" Winkler was in great hopes that he would add

something which might give him insight into the cause of this unhappy quarrel, and waited till Hubert seated himself at the fire, and began mechanically, to split with the poker a piece of wood which lay on the hearth, and which he threw on to make a blaze. "You observe, Herr Justitiarius," said the Baron, "that I am a good-humoured man, and expert at all household services. As for Wolfgang, to say the least, he is full of the most absurd narrow-minded prejudices, and, moreover, has become a downright miser." This remark accorded too nearly with Winkler's own ideas of the *majorats herr*, to allow him any hopes of a speedy reconciliation, and as Wolfgang then re-entered the room, and looked violently incensed, he could not venture to interfere.

In the evening, having to receive some directions from the Baron, as to the management of the property, he went up to his apartment, and found him walking to and fro in much disquietude. He stood still when he saw the Justitiarius, and looked him gloomily and steadfastly in the face. "So then," said he, in a deep broken voice. "My brother is still here? I am aware by your looks what you would say. But you know nothing of

this matter. You know not that this miserable man, for I must call him miserable, like an evil spirit, comes every where in my way, and utterly ruins my peace of mind. If I have not also become incurably wretched, it is not his fault. He has done what he could for this purpose; but Heaven willed that it should fall out otherwise. Since the time that the estate was made into a *majorat*, he persecutes me with the most deadly hatred, and envies me my possessions, which, were they in his hands, would vanish away like chaff before the wind. Of all men that I have ever heard of, he is the most wasteful and extravagant. His load of debts amount to more than half the value of the property which he possesses in Courland, and now driven to distraction by his creditors, who do not fail to torment him, he hastens hither, and urges me to give him money." "And this," said Winkler, "you refuse to an only brother?" "Assuredly," said the Baron, with vehemence, "I do refuse. From the income of the *majorat*, I shall not give away a single dollar. But, now, observe the proposal which I made a few hours ago to this madman, and then judge the feelings of duty by which I am actuated. Our unentailed possessions in

Courland, are, as you know, considerable, and I was willing to give up, on his account, that part of them, that falls to my share, but then, this was to be for the benefit of his family. Hubert married in Courland a young and beautiful woman without fortune, by whom he has children, and they are already reduced to the horrors of poverty. His property, therefore, should be put under trust; enough of the proceeds given him to live upon, and the rest gradually employed to pay off his creditors by instalments. But what cares he for the quiet honourable life that I recommend to him, or for the fate of his wife and children? Large sums of ready money are what he demands, in order that he may spend it as fast as it comes, in shameless extravagance. Some demon has betrayed to him the secret of the hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and he now claims the half of it, as being moveable property, and not influenced by the deed of entail. I must of course refuse him this mad request; but, in my opinion, he is, out of revenge, brooding plans for my destruction."

Winkler tried, as well as he could, on principles of morality and virtue, to persuade the Baron out

of this dislike to his brother; but without success. He was commissioned, however, to hold a private conference with Hubert, and endeavour to bring him to moderate terms, at all events to induce him to submit to the Baron's plan with regard to the property in Courland. This the advocate set about with as much precaution as possible; and was much pleased when Hubert answered, "what you say may be very right. I accept then the proposal made by my brother, but on the condition that he saves me at present from the proceedings of my creditors, who are all on the watch; that he gives me in advance one thousand Fredericks d'or, and, for the future, allows me to take up my residence in the castle of Rolandsitten."—"Never—never!" cried the Baron, when Winkler laid before him this proposal of his brother. "It is in vain to hope for my consent, that Hubert should remain, even for a minute in my house, after I have brought my wife hither. Go then, my dear friend, and say to this disturber of our peace, that he shall have two thousand Frederick's d'or, not as an advance, but as a gift. Now, away—away!" Winkler, after this conversation, concluded for the first time, that the Baron must have married without the know-

ledge of his father, and that, in this marriage, also consisted the ground of dispute between the two brothers. However, he hastened to deliver his message, to which Hubert listened quietly, then said, in a hollow grumbling tone—"Well,—well; I shall take the matter into consideration, but, meanwhile, I must remain here for a few days." Winkler endeavoured, as well as he could, to persuade the discontented youth, that the Baron had only his welfare at heart, which he endeavoured to promote, by making over to him that part of the fortune which was moveable, on condition that he would sign a trust deed for the benefit of his creditors; that, on the whole, he had no just right to complain, though it must be allowed that every deed of entail, by which the whole power is vested in the eldest son was a very hateful transaction. At these words, Hubert, like one who struggles for breath, tore his waistcoat violently open, from collar to skirt, then with one hand thrust into his bosom, he turned round with a *pirouette* like that of an opera dancer, "Poh! poh!" cried he, in a voice that made the room echo, "That which is hateful, has also its origin in hatred!" Thereafter he broke out into an un-

natural and horrid fit of laughter, adding, "How condescendingly the *majorat's herr* thinks of throwing his gold coins at the head of the poor beggar!" So Winkler perceived that, as to a full reconciliation of the two brothers, it was an idea quite out of the question, and gave up troubling himself on the matter.

Hubert now established himself in the chambers which had been appointed for him, in a retired wing of the castle, and, to the great annoyance of the Baron, it seemed as if he had determined on remaining there for a considerable space of time. Meanwhile it was observed, that he had frequent and long conversations with Daniel, the old steward, and that the latter went with him now and then to the wolf-hunting; in other respects Hubert remained in perfect quietness and seclusion, especially avoiding any interview with his brother,—which conduct was, no doubt, quite according to the Baron's wishes. Winkler felt, however, that this state of affairs was one which could not possibly continue long,—and often said to himself, that the strange and mysterious manner which accompanied all the younger Baron's words and actions quite destroyed the spirit of

unanimity and social happiness at the castle, so that Wolfgang's terror when he saw his brother arrive, might now be explained on principles perfectly natural.

CHAPTER VI.

It happened that Winkler was one day sitting alone in the audience-room, quite absorbed over his accounts and law-papers, when Hubert entered. With an expression on his countenance more grave, and at the same time more steadfast than usual, he said, "I have now made up my mind, as there seems to be no alternative. I shall accept my brother's last proposal. Therefore do you forthwith make such arrangements, that I may this very day receive the two thousand Friedricks d'or, and in the evening I shall depart from hence on horseback, and alone."—"What, —with the money?" inquired Winkler. "You are in the right, replied Hubert. "I know what you would say;—the weight is too great. But let it be given in bills of exchange on Isaac Lazarus, the banker in Königsberg. Even this very night I am determined to set out thither; this

residence has become intolerable to my feelings; and I believe the old man's ghost has risen from the grave, and fills the castle anew with his devils and hobgoblins."—"Do you speak thus of your own father, my lord Baron?" said Winkler very gravely. Hubert made no answer,—his lips trembled, and he held by a chair as if about to fall;—but suddenly recovering himself, "So then, Herr Justitiarus," added he, "*to-day*, if you will please to remember, the money or bills must be provided." He then retired abruptly, and Winkler went at once to report the result of this interview to Baron Wolfgang. "No doubt," said the latter, as he was writing out the bills of exchange on Isaac Lazarus, "he perceives plainly enough that all subterfuges and deceptions are with me quite in vain;—he can do nothing against my firm and unalterable determination." These words were pronounced with a grim smile of confidence and satisfaction, for, by the proposed departure of his brother, it seemed as if an insupportable weight were at once lifted from his spirits, and for a long time he had not been so merry as he appeared that evening at supper. Hubert had apologized for being absent, and in-

deed no one regretted that he was not of the party.

Now, the Justitiarius inhabited a retired chamber, of which the windows looked out to the castle court. In the night he was startled suddenly from his sleep, and it seemed as if the tones of a distant melancholy voice had awakened him. Carefully as he now listened, all remained still as the grave, so that he was obliged to reckon the sound which had disturbed him as the delusion of a dream. A feeling of inexplicable terror and anxiety, however, got the better of him in such manner that he could not remain in bed, but rose and went to the window. Stationed there, he perceived, after a short interval, that the castle door was opened,—a figure, carrying a lighted candle, came forth, and stepped across the court. Winkler recognized immediately, in this apparition, the features of old Daniel, and determined to watch him in his progress. First, the old man opened the door of the stable, wherein he disappeared; but, in a few minutes, came out again, leading a horse ready saddled and bridled. Now, then, there stept forward a second figure, wrapt in a travelling mantle, with a fox-skin cap on his head; and Winkler

perceived at once that this last was the Baron Hubert, who spoke with Daniel, gesticulating vehemently for some time, after which he retired abruptly. Thereupon Daniel led the horse back into the stable, closed the door, then returned to the castle, entered, and shut the main portal. It was quite obvious that Hubert, according to his proposal of the morning, had intended to ride away, but had suddenly adopted some other resolution. So far, certainly, there was not any thing alarming; but, at the same time, he could not but perceive that there was somewhat of a different character in that private understanding which still subsisted between the old steward and Hubert, in consequence of which they held such long conversations together. It was with great impatience, therefore, that Winkler waited for the morning, when he resolved to inform the Baron of all that he had observed, and take counsel as to the measures that ought to be adopted against the attacks of the malicious younger brother, who was doubtless meditating revenge.

When eight o'clock struck, at which hour the Baron used to make his appearance, Winkler

heard an extraordinary uproar sounding along the galleries,—doors violently slammed or opened, steps of people running to and fro, and voices shouting aloud. On leaving his apartment, he met many of the servants, who, with visages deadly pale, ran past him, without even answering his questions, and rushed in great agitation from one room to another. At length he ascertained that the Baron was amissing, and that every one had for some time been on the alert to discover him, but in vain! He had retired to bed the preceding night as usual, attended by his confidential *chasseur*, but afterwards must have risen, and gone out in his night-gown and slippers, with the candlestick in his hand; for these articles were found wanting, while his wearing apparel lay as usual on a sofa. With his mind full of horrid anticipations, Winkler ran into the fatal audience-hall,—for Wolfgang, like his father, had chosen a cabinet adjoining to this for his bed-room. The moment that the *Justitiarius* entered the long apartment, he turned his eyes instinctively towards the gate that once led up to the astronomical tower, and, behold, it stood wide open! Shuddering in

every limb, he now exclaimed—"Aye, aye! It must be so. In that horrible abyss he lies dashed to pieces!"

His words were soon found to be correct. Snow had fallen, which, by its reflection, aided the day-light, so that those who looked down into the chasm, thought they could clearly distinguish the form, now stiffened in death, of the unfortunate man, who lay with his hands clenched, and eyes starting from their sockets, amid the stones and rubbish. After some unavoidable delay, workmen were sent down, at the risk of their lives, by means of several ladders tied together, and succeeded in drawing up the dead body. In the convulsive strife of his last agony, the Baron had firmly seized on the silver candlestick; the hand in which it was thus grasped, was the only uninjured part of his whole frame, which, by striking against the stones in its descent, had been hideously shattered, so that it presented a most appalling spectacle.

Just as the body had been laid out in the same place where the remains of the old Baron Roderick had been deposited so short a time before, Hubert, with the frenzy of despair in his coun-

tenance, rushed into the room. Quite overpowered by the scene that here awaited him, he almost howled out—" Brother—oh my poor brother !—no—this much I surely never implored from the demons of revenge that had taken possession of my heart !"—Winkler trembled at these words, feeling as if irresistibly impelled to rush forward and accuse Hubert openly of fratricide. For this, however, the present was no fitting time, for the Baron had fallen senseless on the floor, whence the servants carried him to bed, and he did not recover from his swoon till after a long interval. Then pale as a ghost, with his eyes clouded in grief, he came into Winkler's room, where, throwing himself into a chair, he exclaimed—" In truth, I could almost have wished for my brother's death, because he was cold hearted and avaricious, and my father had, by a foolish will, made over to him all the best of the property. But now he has brought on himself his own death, after a manner the most unforeseen and horrible ; of course, I am master of Rolandsitten ; but my heart is quite crushed and broken. I could not stand the shock of this morning, and shall never more be happy. Mean-

while you shall be confirmed in your office, and shall receive from me an unlimited power as to the management of the estate, on which I cannot bear to live any longer." Hubert then abruptly started up, making a sign that he would not enter into any farther conversation, left the room, and, within a few hours afterwards, had quitted the castle, and was on the road to Königsberg.

The conclusion generally drawn as to the cause of this fatal event, was, that the unfortunate Wolfgang had, when he rose in the night, intended going into another small room in which there was a library. In the confusion of the moment, being perhaps half asleep, he had, instead of the library door, opened the gateway of the tower, stepped across the threshold unawares, and, of course, fallen accidentally into the abyss:—To Winkler, however, this explanation seemed far from being satisfactory or naturally intelligible. If the Baron could not sleep, and wished to fetch a volume from the book closet to read, this excluded all belief of his being in a state of half slumber; and yet, it could only be when half asleep, or under an attack of somnambulism, that he could mistake the door of his own study, and,

instead of it, open the gate of the astronomical tower. But farther,—this last was always kept firmly locked, and it was not possible that it could have been opened without much trouble. Accordingly, Winkler took occasion, when all the domestics were assembled together, to state these improbabilities, and dissent from the conclusion they had drawn. "Aye, aye!" said the late Baron's confidential *chasseur*, "the herr Justitiarius is in the right. The misfortune could not have happened in that manner." This was all that he would venture to say in the presence of so many observers; but he agreed to be more explicit if admitted to a private interview, at which he declared, that his wish to avoid betraying circumstances that might detract from the fair character of his late master, had prevented him from speaking before;—that the Baron had more than a hundred times talked with him of the vast treasures that were concealed in the rubbish of the tower, and frequently, as if driven on by an evil spirit, he went at midnight to the gate, of which Daniel had been obliged to give him the key;—then he opened it, and, with a vague fantastic expression of hope and curiosity on his features,

looked down to the golden mines which, according to his calculation, were certainly to be found beneath. Winkler doubted no longer, therefore, that the Baron, on that fatal night after the *chasseur* left him, had taken one of his usual walks to the tower gate, where a sudden apoplexy or giddiness had seized him, and he had fallen down unawares into the abyss. Daniel, the old steward, was also of this opinion; he seemed much shocked at the Baron's death, and suggested that it would be proper to wall up the entrance to the ruined tower with bricks and mortar, which accordingly was done.

As for Baron Hubert, who had thus succeeded to the property, he did not interfere any farther, having delegated his power to the Justitiarius, and gone back directly through Königsberg to Courland. Under Winkler's management, the building of the new castle was, of course, postponed, though, at the same time, a good deal of expence was incurred in repairing the old mansion.

Several years had thus past away, when in the autumn of 18—, Hubert took it into his head to come for the first time as proprietor and *Majorats-herr* to Rolandsitten, and after being several

days shut up in the business room with Winkler, he seemed to care nothing for the field sports, but returned immediately to Courland. On his way through Königsberg, he had deposited there and registered his last will, for during his short abode at Rolandsitten he seemed completely altered in temper and disposition, and spoke much of his own anticipations of approaching death. These apprehensions were very soon fulfilled, for he died early in the following year. His only son, who, after his father, was named Hubert, came over immediately from Courland, in order to take possession of Rolandsitten, and was followed by his mother and sister. This young man seemed to unite in his own person all the bad qualities of his predecessors, and indeed, from the first moment of his arrival, he proved himself to be supercilious, overbearing, and intractable in his humour. All at once he insisted that a thousand different arrangements and indulgences, which, by use and wont, had been looked upon as fixed in the castle, should be changed, because they did not suit his notions of what was right and proper. For example, he turned the cook out of doors, insisting that he

could not dress a dinner fit even for a respectable farmer, not to speak of a nobleman; then as to the coachman (who acted as head groom or *stall-meister*;) the young Freyherr was so incensed, that he tried to beat him, in which, however, success was out of the question, for the fellow, being as strong as oak and iron, did not choose to permit that liberty. In short, this Hubert the second was in full march to assume the position of a severe and imperious master, when Winkler came, gravely and resolutely assuring him, that he should not change so much as the station of a chair or a table, far less drive any living creature, or even a cat out of the house, who wished to remain in it, until the last will and testament of the former proprietor had been opened. At these words, the youth absolutely trembled and foamed with rage. "Here," said he, "*you* have nothing to do! you must submit, even without a whisper of opposition, to the sovereign power of the *Majorats-herr*." Winkler, however, was not to be intimidated in this manner. With a quiet stern look he answered, "Don't be in too great a hurry, my lord Baron! At all events, you can have no authority here,

till after the opening of your father's will. I am now sole master at Rolandsitten, and, of course, know how to meet violence with violence. You will please to remember, that in virtue of my powers as executor, I have even the right, if I were so disposed, to prevent you from taking up your abode in this castle." The steadfast composure of the Justitarius did not fail to give the proper effect to his words, and the young Baron, who had been about to break out again with great violence, felt the weakness of his weapons against such a determined adversary, and was obliged to cover his defeat as well as he could, under a fit of scornful laughter.

Three months had passed away, and the day was come on which, according to the verbal instructions of the deceased Baron, the testament was to be examined in the town of Königsberg, where it had been deposited. Besides the law-officers, with the Baron and Winkler, there was a young man of fine appearance in the hall, who accompanied the Justitiarius, and of whom, as he had a large bundle of papers in his bosom, the audience at first thought that he attended as a clerk. The Baron eyed him scornfully, according to his

usual custom towards all the world, and demanded that the tiresome ceremonies of the day might be got through as quickly as possible, without needless words and circumlocution. He did not comprehend how, in this instance of an entailed estate, there could be so much importance attached to a testamentary deed, and as to the contents of the paper, he would allow them to be observed or not, just as it suited his own good pleasure. Meanwhile he had recognized the hand and seal of his late father, having cast on them an ill-natured momentary look. Then, as the clerk began to read aloud, he looked away with an air of indifference to the window,—with his right arm thrown carelessly on the back of his chair, his left on the writing-table, and drumming with his finger on its green cover. After a short preamble, Baron Hubert the testator declared that he had never possessed the estate as real master,—but had only been an agent to take charge of it for the absent son of the late Wolfgang von Rolandsitten, which son was named after his grandfather Roderick, and must, of course, be acknowledged as the individual to whom, according to the laws of succession, the property must now be-

long. Among his papers would be found the most accurate account of expences and receipts during the time that he had managed the estate. Farther, according to the explanations given by Hubert in this testament, his brother Wolfgang had, during his travels, made the acquaintance of Mademoiselle Julia de St Val, at Geneva,—and fallen so vehemently in love with her, that he resolved at all risks to bring about a marriage. She had no dowry, and her family, though respectable in rank, were by no means in opulent circumstances, for which reason, he dared not expect that the old Baron Roderick would approve of the match,—for his whole existence was a continued struggle to save money, and to increase the revenues of the *majorat*. However, he ventured to dispatch a letter to his father from Paris, explaining his situation, and an answer was received precisely in that angry style which had been anticipated. The old man declared that he had already fixed on a bride for his successor, and on no account would he hear of any other. Wolfgang, instead of taking refuge in England, as it was said he had done, went back to Geneva, and remained there under the assumed name of Born,

having solemnized his marriage with Julia de St Val, who, after the lapse of one year, bore him a son, who, consequently, was now lord of the *majorat.* Of course the question why Hubert, being perfectly aware of all this, had been so long silent, and had conducted himself as if he were proprietor of the estate, was not forgotten. For this, several reasons were assigned, that in truth did not appear very satisfactory; and references were made to remote conversations with Wolfgang on the subject, as to which it was impossible now to prove whether they had or had not taken place.

During the reading of the will, the Baron was of course roused from his mood of nonchalance, and sat staring in the utmost astonishment at the clerk, who had thus announced to him his misfortune. When the deed had been gone through, Winkler stood up, took the young man whom he had brought with him by the hand, and said, making a bow to the law-officers, "Here, gentlemen, I have the honour of presenting to you, the Baron Roderic von Rolandsitten, rightful owner of that large estate." At these words, Baron Hubert, biting his lips, with an aspect of repressed rage,

looked at the youth, who seemed fallen from the moon to deprive him of the rich *majorat*, and half the unentailed property in Courland; then raising his clenched hand, shook it in an attitude of furious defiance, and ran headlong out of the court-house. Meanwhile, at the command of the judges, Baron Roderick produced the documents by which he was to be legitimized, and rendered up an attested extract, from the register of the church where his father was married, certifying with day and date, that the merchant Wolfgang Born, from the town of Königsberg, was regularly betrothed to the lady Julia de St Val. Added to this were his own baptismal certificate, also several letters of the Baron to his mother, long since deceased, which, however, had no other signature than W. Winkler who now saw these papers for the first time, looked them over with a dark lowering expression, as if all were not right, then said, rather mournfully, as he folded them up, "well—God will yet help us!"

On the very next day, Baron Hubert, by means of an advocate whom he had engaged in his service, gave in a representation to the government

at Königsberg, in which he demanded no less than the instant delivery of Rolandsitten, with all the rights and privileges thereto belonging, into his possession. It was quite obvious, maintained the advocate, that neither by testament, nor in any other way, could the late Baron Hubert exercise power in the disposition of an entailed estate. According to the line of succession, the son must of course succeed to the father, and the rights of inheritance must not be disturbed by mere pretensions, which the *soi-disant* young Baron might substantiate if he could, but hitherto nothing effectual had been done for this purpose."

Much as probability weighed in favour of what had been stated in the testament, yet Hubert's demand must, in all probability, have been acceded to, had it not been for Winkler's restless endeavours, and his assurances that Baron Roderick's proofs would soon be fully established. By this means he was enabled to obtain a short interregnum ;—the delivery of the *majorat*, whether to one or other party, was deferred, and his own administration prolonged till farther documents could be brought forward.

In a short time, however, Winkler saw but

too well how difficult it would be for him to keep his promise. He had turned over every letter of the old astrologer, without finding the slightest trace of any proof to substantiate that alleged marriage of Wolfgang with Mademoiselle de St Val. Lost in perplexing thoughts, he was sitting one night in old Roderick's bed-room, which he had searched through and through, and had begun to fix his attention on a letter that he had commenced to a notary in Geneva, who was represented to him as a sharp intelligent man, and from whom he expected to receive some notices which would yet place him on firm ground, before the stipulated time of his administration was over. It was now midnight, and the full moon shone brightly into the adjoining hall, to which the door leading from the bed-room stood open. All had been for some time hushed and silent as the grave, when Winkler suddenly heard a noise, as of some one coming slowly and heavily up stairs, also the ringing and rattling of keys. Instantly he was on the alert—rose up, went into the hall, and plainly ascertained that some one was advancing along the corridor towards the main door, which opened accordingly, and a man in a night-dress entered,

with a pale anxious visage—in one hand a candlestick, with a thick wax light—and in the other a great bunch of keys.

Winkler immediately recognized the house steward, and was on the point of asking him what in all the world he wanted there so late at night, when the whole appearance of the man struck him as being so mysterious and ghostly, that he could not help shuddering. "No doubt," said he, "this person must be a sleep-walker;" and he determined to watch his proceedings for some time in silence. With slow measured steps, the old man went straight towards the walled-up door, which had formerly led to the astronomical tower. Directly before it he remained stationary, and, as if from the very bottom of his heart, uttered a long howling cry, which echoed so horribly through the hall, that the Justitiarius actually trembled with affright. Then, having set the candlestick on the ground, and stuck the keys into his girdle, Daniel began with both hands to scratch against the wall, so that it was unaccountable how the pain that he must have caused to himself did not awake him, groaning all the while, as if under the influence of some nameless and deadly torment.

Now, he laid his ear to the wall, as if watching for some voice within—then turned round and waved his hand, as if to quiet the anxiety of some one that he supposed to be near him. At last, he stooped down, lifted up the candlestick carefully, and went back with the same solemn demeanour through the door. Winkler was resolved to see the end of all this—ran for his own candle, and followed the old man, who went sedately down stairs, opened the great gate of the castle, (when the Justitiarius, unobserved, contrived to slip out along with him,) thereafter betook himself to the stable, where he stationed the candle with great caution, in a place where it could not come in contact with the hay or wood-work—took down bridle and saddle, and got ready one of the horses, arranging accurately the girths and stirrup buckles —smoothing the animal's hair on the forehead, and clapping his neck, led him out to the court. There he stood for some moments, nodding his head, bowing, and muttering as if he received orders; after which, he led the horse back to the stall, took off the saddle and bridle, and bound it to the manger. Finally, he took up the candlestick, locked the stable, returned to the castle, and

retreated to his own chamber, carefully bolting the door.

By this whole exhibition, Winkler was dreadfully agitated; and not a doubt remained on his mind that some horrid crime, yet unsuspected and unheard of, was the lurking cause of the steward's nocturnal wanderings. It occurred to him also, that he might possibly turn to account his observations of to-night in favour of his *protegé*, the young Baron Roderick; therefore, on the following evening, when the steward came to receive some directions as to his department in the household, Winkler seized him by both arms, and, forcing him into a chair—"Hark you, old friend, Daniel," said he, "I have long wished to hear your opinion of that state of confusion into which the strange testament of the Baron Hubert has unavoidably brought us. Is it your opinion, then, that the young man is absolutely the son of Wolfgang, and the offspring of a lawful marriage?" The old man leaned sideways in his arm-chair, and tried to avoid meeting Winkler's eye. "Umph," said he, "it may be so, or it may be not; what business is that of mine? Let who will be master here—it is all one to Daniel." "Nay, nay,"

resumed Winkler; "but what I intended to say was this: You had the old Baron's complete confidence; therefore, he certainly would not conceal from you the real state of affairs as to his sons, and the line of family succession. No doubt he spoke to you of the marriage which Wolfgang had made against his will?" "As to these matters, to tell the truth, I cannot recollect," said the old man, yawning with an aspect of perfect indifference. "But thou art half asleep, Daniel," said Winkler; "Hadst thou an unquiet night?" "As if I did not know that!" answered the steward, coldly. "However, I must now go and order supper." With these words he rose from his chair, walking almost two-fold, and yawning more drowsily than before. "Nay, don't be in such a hurry, old friend," replied Winkler, taking him by the arm, and trying to force him back into his seat; but in vain. The old man took his place at the table, indeed, leaning on it with his hands, and bending forward towards the Justitiarius. "What, then, should I stay for?" said he. "What in all the world have I to do with the Baron's will, and the contest about the property of Rolandsitten?" "Oh, don't be afraid," answered Winkler. "On

that head, my good friend, we shall not say one word more; but rather speak of something else. You are evidently quite out of humour; you have been yawning sadly; both which circumstances are signs of extraordinary fatigue,—so that I begin to think it must have been Daniel himself who came at midnight, when——" "*I* indeed? How or where did I come to you in the night?" said the steward, persisting in the same gesture. "Only about eighteen hours ago," answered Winkler, "when I was sitting in the bed-room of the old Baron, with my door open, you came into the great hall, with your visage pale and grim, like that of any ghost. You went straight up to the place where there was once a gateway into the tower, and stood a long time scratching against the wall, and groaning terribly. What was the meaning of all this? Are you a sleep-walker, Daniel?" At these words, the steward trembled so, that he seemed just about to fall on the floor. The Justitiarius hastily placed a chair for him, into which he dropped, his teeth chattering as if in an ague fit, and without being able to answer one syllable. "Aye," resumed Winkler, after a short pause, "there is one symptom, among

others, very strange in the case of those sleep-walkers. On the day following their nightly rambles, they cannot muster up the slightest recollection of the situation in which they were, or of aught that had been said and done under the influence of their malady." These words seemed likely to rouse the steward; but he remained silent. "I myself," continued Winkler, "have before now witnessed somewhat resembling that which happened yesterday to you. I had once an intimate and highly valued friend who always began his wanderings whenever it drew near the time of the full moon; but he did not merely stalk about, but would even take his place at a table, and set to work writing letters. The circumstance most remarkable, however, was, that if I began to whisper him softly in the ear, I could soon succeed in leading him into conversation. He used to answer quite correctly to all questions; and even that which, when awake, he would have carefully reserved, now flowed involuntarily from his lips, as if he were wholly under the dominion of some influence which he could not control. On my word, Daniel, I believe, that if a sleep-walker had concealed some horrid crime, and it had weighed on his conscience

ever so long, yet at such times one might be able to extract from him a full confession! It is well, then, for such people as you and I, my good old friend; *we* might walk in our sleep, whenever a full moon came round, and no one that questioned us would ever be the wiser as to any secret robberies or murders. But hark you, Daniel; surely, when you scratch in that vile way with your nails against the plaster wall, you have some plan of carrying on old Baron Roderick's astronomical observations? Well, the next time that you happen to wander, if I am awake, I shall not fail to question you on that head." As Winkler spoke thus, the old man's agitation had always increased, till his whole frame seemed convulsed; and, attempting to speak, he broke out into a confused babbling noise, of which not one sentence was intelligible. So Winkler rung for the servants, who brought lights; but, without seeming to perceive their presence, Daniel persisted in his convulsions and unmeaning attempts at speech, till they were obliged to take him up as if he had been a mere automaton, and carry him away to bed. After he had spent about an hour in this horrid state, he fell into a sleep so deep, that it almost resembled a swoon. On awak-

ing, he demanded wine, and when he had drank some glasses, instead of permitting the servants to stay and watch him as they intended to do, he drove them all out of the room, and locked himself up as usual.

Winkler had spoken quite in earnest as to the questions which he designed to put to the steward, if he should appear once more like a ghost in the audience-hall; at the same time, he did not forget that Daniel, being thus made aware of his own sleep-walking propensities, would try every method to evade him,—moreover, that confessions, extorted from one in that extraordinary situation, though they might afford hints to act on in private, could by no means be brought forward as proofs. Notwithstanding all this, he was on the watch at midnight, hoping that the old man, as it often happens to victims of this malady, would be forced to act involuntarily, and could not help wandering till the moon began to wane. As the hour drew near, however, his attention was arrested by a great noise in the court, and he distinguished, among other sounds, that a window had been driven in, so that the glass and frame work broke to shivers. Instantly, he hastened down

stairs, and, on passing through the corridor, he was assailed by an oppressive smell of fire, and a dense smoke, as if from burning cloth, which, as he soon found, proceeded from the room of the house-steward. On coming to the door, he was met by several servants, who were bearing out the body of the old man, to all appearance dead! On inquiry, Winkler understood that, towards midnight, one of the under grooms had been alarmed by a strange hollow knocking from Daniel's apartment. Fearing that his illness had returned, he was getting up in order to learn what was the matter, when the porter in the court, who, by some lucky chance, had been awake, called out, "Fire—fire—in the room of the *herr intendant*—burning fiercely!" At this outcry, several servants were assembled in a moment; but all endeavours to break in the door, proved in vain! Meanwhile, the porter, more resolute than any of them, had knocked the window in pieces, and, luckily, it was so situated that he could reach it without a ladder. On entering the room, he found that only the bed and window curtains were burning; and a few buckets of water were sufficient to extinguish them. As to the steward, he was lying in the middle of the floor in a state of insensibility, but still grasp-

ing convulsively the candle, with which he had set fire to the curtains, and caused all this uproar. The burning rags which flew about had already scorched his hair and dress, so that, if timely aid had not been rendered, his death would have been inevitable. On examining the door, they were much surprised to find that it was secured inside by two massive bolts, which had not been there the day preceding.

The Justitiarius perceived plainly, that the old man had wished to render his leaving the room quite impossible,—but, from the fatigues of the former night, sleep had overtaken him, and he could not resist the impulse that forced him to rise and walk about. Meeting with unusual obstacles when he wished to leave his apartment, he had tried to find some other outlet, and, being suddenly awoke by the fire, had fallen down in a death-like swoon of affright. Afterwards, he was attacked by a fit of severe illness—would not speak but in monosyllables—took but little nourishment, and lay with his eyes fixed and staring, as if tormented by the reproaches of an evil conscience, of which he dared not speak to any one. Indeed, Winkler believed that his last moments were certainly near at hand.

CHAPTER VII.

MEANWHILE all possible exertions (limited as they were) had been made in favour of the young Baron Roderick; and the Justitiarius finding nothing farther that could reasonably detain him at Rolandsitten, wished, therefore, to return to Königsberg. His departure was appointed for the following morning,—and, very late at night, he set to work packing up his papers, among which, there was a little billet addressed to him from the Baron Hubert, sealed, and with a note at the corner, "To be read after the opening of my will." This had hitherto, in a most unaccountable manner, escaped his attention. He was on the point of breaking up this packet, when the door opened, and, with slow ghostly steps, Daniel came into the room!—Under his arm he carried a large black portfolio, which he laid silently on the writing-table,—then falling on his knees, and

uttering a deep groan, he faltered out—"No! I would rather not die on the scaffold! God above is our judge, and will amply punish the guilty!" Having pronounced these words, he rose again with great effort—made a sign that he would not enter into any dialogue, and solemnly retreated as he had come. Winkler of course forgot all the arrangements for his journey, and spent the whole night in reading the contents of this black portfeuille, and Baron Hubert's private packet.

The documents thus afforded, were all quite in harmony one with another; and the Justitiarius found himself at once placed on firm ground, so that he knew the course to be pursued. Accordingly, when he arrived at Königsberg, he betook himself to the Baron Hubert, who received him rudely enough, though with a sort of affected ceremony, as if he were amply convinced of his own rights and importance, in which no one could disturb him. Their interview, which began at mid-day, was not broken off till near midnight; and the consequences were, that Baron Hubert made his appearance next morning in the council-room, where he declared publicly, that

the new claimant of the Rolandsitten estate was (according to his father's testament) the eldest born son in lawful wedlock of the late Baron Wolfgang, and consequently the sole and rightful heir. On his retreat from the town-hall, his carriage, with post horses, stood ready at the door; he stepped in and was driven off in a great hurry, leaving behind him his mother and sister, who, perhaps, would never see him again. So at least he had expressed himself in a farewell letter, written within the last twelve hours, and delivered after his departure.

Baron Roderick's astonishment at the changes which had thus taken place was very great, and he begged that Winkler would explain to him more particularly how such consequences had been brought about. The Justitiarius, however, begged him not to waste time on these inquiries, the point under immediate consideration being to place him, as soon as possible, in possession of the *majorat*, which the judges would not agree to till his claim of legitimacy was fully established. Meanwhile Winkler proposed to the Baron that he should live at Rolandsitten, adding thereto that Hubert's mother and sister,

who, by his sudden departure, were brought into embarrassment, would prefer a quiet retirement at the family mansion to their present residence in the noisy and expensive capital. The delight with which Roderick evidently dwelt on the prospect of being for some time under the same roof with the Baroness and her daughter, betrayed obviously what an impression Celestina, who was indeed a very beautiful and fascinating girl, had made on his heart. The plan of living at Rolandsitten was adopted accordingly, and, in the course of a few weeks, he had gained the young lady's affections, and her mother's cordial approbation of their marriage,—though in Winkler's opinion this was somewhat rash and premature; for, up to the present hour, the *legal* proofs of Roderick's legitimacy remained unadjusted. His interference, however, would have been unavailing; but letters from Courland at last interrupted this life of Arcadian happiness at the castle. Hubert, it seemed, had not even visited the Courland estate, after leaving Königsberg, but had gone straight to Petersburg, had there entered into the Emperor's service, and was now on the field marching against the Persians, with whom

the Russians were at war. This intelligence obliged the Baroness and her daughter to leave Rolandsitten for Courland, in order that the property there might not remain wholly neglected, and Roderick, who looked upon his marriage as certain, insisted that he should be allowed to attend them. Winkler, too, returned at this time to Königsberg, so that the castle was left to its old loneliness and desolation. The house-steward's malady became always worse and worse,—and there seemed little chance of his recovery; consequently the duties of his station were given in charge to that old *chasseur* named Franz, who had been the faithful attendant of the late Baron Wolfgang.

At length, after a long tiresome interval of suspense, Winkler received from Switzerland the most favourable information. The priest who had married Wolfgang, was indeed long since dead,—but, however, there was found in his handwriting, in one of the church record-books, a memorandum, setting forth that the stranger calling himself Wolfgang Born, betwixt whom and the Lady Julia de St Val, he had solemnized a marriage,—had privately imparted to him

documents, by which it appeared amply proved, that his name was not Born, but the Baron Wolfgang von Rolandsitten, eldest son of the proprietor of that estate. Besides, there were two witnesses,—a merchant in Geneva, and an old French captain, who had since gone to Lyons, who were equally in Wolfgang's confidence, and their evidence most satisfactorily confirmed the notice of the priest in the church record. These proofs having been gone through, Winkler lost no time in drawing up the required papers, in order that Roderick might be duly established as *majorat's herr*, and the time of his accession was appointed for the following autumn. As for Baron Hubert, he had been struck dead by a cannon shot, in the very first engagement, thus meeting the same fate with his youngest brother, who was, in like manner, killed on the field of battle, about a year before the late Hubert died. So the Courland estates fell to the Baroness Celestina of Rolandsitten, and supplied her with a rich dowry on her marriage with the fortunate Roderick.

Their wedding was fixed accordingly; and, late in the month of November, the young Baron, with

his bride and mother-in-law, arrived in great pomp at Rolandsitten. Hereupon ensued the formal surrender of the *majorat*, and the marriage of Celestina and Roderick. Of course, the castle was thronged with guests, and many weeks were past over in luxury and pleasure, till at length the party began to tire of banquetings and hunting excursions, so that one by one gradually dropt off the list, to the great satisfaction of Winkler, who had resolved not to leave the young Baron, without finding leisure beforehand to instruct him in many points as to the management of the property, of which he must be yet ignorant. The Baron's uncle, Hubert, had kept the most accurate accounts as to receipts and disbursements; so that, as the former had only received a limited sum for his yearly board and education, a great addition had now been made to that sum of ready money, which had been left by the old astrologer. Only for the first three years had Hubert employed the receipts of the Rolandsitten estate for his own purposes; and even for the sum thus appropriated, he had granted a bond in relief, with security on that part of the Courland property which was exclusively his own.

Since the time when old Daniel, the steward, appeared to Winkler as a sleep-walker, the Justitiarius had always chosen the astrologer's bedroom to pass the night in, so that he might be on the watch, in case an opportunity was afforded for making any farther discoveries. In a short time, however, all doubt was at an end. The Baron used to meet Winkler either in this room or in the adjoining hall, when they had accounts or other law papers to look over together. So it happened that they were sitting one night, much later than usual, over a blazing fire—Winkler with his pen in his hand, and the Baron with a large folio volume open before him—calculating the present amount of their wealth, and the probable increase of income. Both were so much occupied that they never once noticed the roaring of the breakers along the desolate shore—the fearful cries of the seafowl, that even flapped against the windows in their flight, which was always a sign of an extraordinary storm—nor even the storm itself, which thundered through the chimney, and howled through the long corridors of the castle. At last, after a terrific blast, which almost shook the building to its foundation, the full moon broke out, and her

light was visible through one half of the apartment, though they had candles in another. Just then, Winkler happened to exclaim, "Very rough weather!" The Baron, quite absorbed in his own plans, what he should now do with the riches which had thus fallen into his hands, turned over another leaf with a self-satisfied smile—"Rather stormy, no doubt," said he. His tranquillity, however, was effectually broken; for, at that moment, the door of the hall burst open, and there appeared at it a figure, such as might have well inspired terror in the stoutest heart. It was Daniel the steward, who had long been confined to bed by severe sickness, and who, as every one believed, was unable even to walk across his own room. Now, however, he could not resist the influence of the full moon; but had once more left his bed at midnight, though tottering in his weakness, and, with a visage so much more like that of a corpse than a living being, that the Baron looked at him with the utmost horror, which always increased, when the steward went to the fatal compartment on the wall, and began with low howls and groans to scratch on it as before. At last, Roderick started up—his face ghastly pale, and his hair standing

on end—in a threatening attitude he stepped up to the old man, and called out, in a voice so deep and stern, that the hall rung and echoed, "Daniel—Daniel—what art thou about here at such an hour?" At these words, the miserable somnambulist uttered again that unearthly cry, more like that of a wounded wild beast than a man,—just as he had done at the time when Wolfgang insulted him, and threw him the purse of gold, vainly hoping to compensate for the injury he had inflicted. In the same instant, too, he fell to the ground powerless and insensible. Winkler rang and shouted for assistance; but when the servants came and lifted him up, all attempts to restore animation were in vain. He was already dead. "Good Heavens," cried the Baron, in great agitation, "have I not heard that a sleep-walker may die on the spot, if he hears his own name called aloud? Unfortunate man that I am! This old man's fate is owing to my rashness; and henceforth I shall never cease to reproach myself."

When the servants had removed the dead body, and Winkler found that the Baron still continued to distress himself on account of that event, of which he had been unintentionally the cause, the

Justitiarius found it was the proper time to make him acquainted with a mystery, of which he could not otherwise have had the slightest suspicion. "Baron Roderick," said he, "the wretch who just now fell dead at your feet, deserves not your compassion, for you have now to learn that he—even this Daniel—was the remorseless assassin of your father! It was the conscious guilt of this horrid deed that weighed on his after life, so that he had no rest by night nor by day; but Providence had decreed that the son should prove an instrument of vengeance on his father's murderer; and those very words which you thundered in his ears, were the last which were uttered by the unfortunate Baron Wolfgang!" Trembling, and unable to answer a word, Roderick had gone back towards the fire and drawn his chair near it.—Winkler resumed his station at the table, and, in the next place, read over that short document which had been addressed to him by the Baron Hubert, and which, according to his direction, was not to be opened till after the publication of the will. The writer lamented, with expressions of the strongest remorse, the hatred which he had conceived against his elder brother, from the moment that he heard

how the estate was to be disposed of. It was impossible for him, however, to venture on any open attack; and he had recourse, therefore, to malicious stratagem, in order to bring about a misunderstanding between his father and Wolfgang. However, this could serve no purpose of any importance, as the deed of entail having been once implemented, Baron Roderick himself could not have taken away from the elder brother the prerogatives that had been thus conferred; nor even, had his affections been wholly alienated, would he have wished to make any change in his arrangements as to the property. However, when Wolfgang formed that connection with Mademoiselle de St Val, at Geneva, Hubert believed that the time had arrived when he could effectually ruin his brother; and now he began to lay plans along with Daniel, the house-steward, in hopes that Baron Roderick might be provoked into measures that would drive his elder son into absolute despair.

He was perfectly aware that, according to the cunning astrologer's intentions, the marriage of his successor, with a German lady of high birth and fortune, was absolutely indispensable, for the old man had read this ordonnance already in the

stars, and well knew, that if the good fortune they announced were neglected, absolute ruin would ensue to the family and estates of Rolandsitten. Wolfgang's marriage with Julia seemed to him of all actions that to which he could least extend any degree of indulgence; it was like a direct interposition of some hostile power against the influence of those constellations which had hitherto favoured him in his worldly undertakings; under whose auspices, at least, he had been able to amass great wealth. As for Julia de St Val, he looked on her as a kind of disguised evil spirit, so dangerous, that every means, however violent, would be justifiable in order to bring about her destruction. Hubert was well aware that, from the nature of his brother's attachment to this young lady, separation from her would not only render him miserable, but probably cause his death;—as to the slightest feeling of remorse at this crime, Hubert was hardened against it by an additional ground of envy and hatred,—for he himself had admired the extraordinary beauty of Julia, and would have paid his addresses, had he not found that her affections were already engaged. It was the will of Providence, however, that Wolfgang's

precaution and unshaken resolution should triumph over the vile stratagems that were laid against him;—his marriage with Julia, and the consequent birth of a son, were kept so private, that Hubert did not find out the truth. It was only when the old Baron began to feel that his own life was drawing to a close, that the reflection came over him, "What if my successor should yet, after my death, consummate that detestable marriage with the daughter of a Swiss beggar?" Therefore, in the same letter in which he had predicted his own fate, and commanded Wolfgang to be at Rolandsitten on a certain day, to enter on his hereditary rights, he pronounced against his son a most horrible malediction, which should rest on him for ever, if he did not dissolve all connection with Julia de St Val. It was this letter which Baron Wolfgang burned on the day of his arrival, as he stood over the dead body of his father.

At the same time the old man wrote to Hubert, that his brother had certainly entered into engagements with the Swiss lady, but that, according to the fearful threat pronounced in his letter, the connection would doubtless be broken off. Hubert thought this was but a phantom of his father's

disordered imagination; however, he was soon undeceived, when the new *Majorats-herr*, not only confirmed the suppositions of the astrologer; but added, that he had a son, whom, with his beloved wife, he would soon bring from their humble estate in Switzerland, to share in his present riches and prosperity. Death overtook him before he could set out on his intended route back to Geneva; and Hubert, carefully concealing what his brother had told him on their first meeting, took possession of Rolandsitten, as there was yet no one to oppose him. After a few years, however, he became the victim of bitter repentance; of which the impression was deepened, by the hatred which began to show itself between his own two sons. "Thou art but a poor beggarly fellow," said the elder boy one day, when some accidental dispute had happened between them; "but I shall, at some time or another, be lord of all Rolandsitten; then thou wilt come to me humbly, and bow to the ground, if I give thee money to buy a new coat." The younger child had at this moment a knife in his hand, and threw it at his brother with such violence, that a dangerous wound in the head was the consequence, from

which he with difficulty recovered. Hubert fearing that some direful misfortune would ensue, sent the younger boy to Petersburg, where he was entered at a military school, and afterwards died an officer on the battle-field, when engaged with Suwarrow against the French. To reveal, in his own lifetime, the deceit of which he had been guilty, was more than Hubert had resolution to fulfil, but he determined that he would not, for the future, deprive the real heir of a single dollar, to which he had a rightful claim. Accordingly, he made inquiries in Geneva, and learned that Julia, inconsolable for the loss of her husband, with whose rank she was to this hour unacquainted, and believing firmly, that if still alive, he would have long since returned to her, had fallen into a rapid decline and died; but as for her son, he had been placed under the care of a respectable guardian at Geneva, who showed him every possible attention. Baron Hubert then announced himself by a confidential messenger, as a near relation of the late merchant Wolfgang Born, who had been lost at sea; and sent from time to time sums of money, which supplied ample means of obtaining, for the young man, a respect-

able and genteel education. As to Wolfgang's death, Baron Hubert often spoke of it in a manner so mysterious, that suspicions might well have been excited of his having been an accomplice in some horrid treachery, but the contents of the black portfolio, which Winkler received from Daniel, removed every doubt.

It was by the latter's interference that Hubert became acquainted with the discovery of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars,—and consequently made his appearance at the castle. It has been told already in what manner he was received by his brother, so that, being disappointed in all his expectations, he wished to return to Courland, when Winkler prevented him, in hopes of bringing about a reconciliation. Meanwhile, Daniel was tormented by an unconquerable thirst of revenge, which he was determined to gratify against the young man who had proposed to turn him, like a dog, out of the castle where he had been so long a faithful servant,—and he found that the best means of fulfilling his own purposes, would be to foster as much as possible the passions that raged in the heart of Hubert,—labouring, as he now did, under a load of debts which he could not

liquidate, and keenly feeling the coldness of the reception which he had met with at Rolandsitten. So it happened that when they went out together amid the gloomy forests, to hunt wild boars or other game, their whole conversation turned on Wolfgang's destruction. On one of those excursions (according to the steward's long written confessions,) Hubert looked askance and took aim with his firelock. "Make away with him?" said he in a voice half articulate, "that was your advice, old friend?" "Aye truly," answered the steward, with a grin like that of a demon, "make away with him doubtless—but mark you—*mein herr Baron!* not *so!* There is a better way." Daniel then affirmed that he would murder Wolfgang, and perpetrate the deed in such manner, that it would be impossible for any mortal to form a conjecture as to the real cause of his death. As to Hubert, however, after he had received a large sum of ready money, he began to entertain an abhorrence at the mere idea of such horrid schemes, and determined to quit the castle, that he might not be exposed to farther temptation. According to agreement, his horse was saddled for him at a late hour, and he was about to mount and ride away,

when Daniel, with a fiendish grin on his visage, and in a shrill unnatural tone, addressed him. " I should have thought, Baron Hubert, that you had better have remained some time longer on your estate, which has just now fallen into your own hands,—for the proud Baron Wolfgang lies yonder dashed to pieces in that abyss of the ruined watch-tower !" The steward had, indeed, remarked, that the *majorat's herr*, tormented by his restless and insatiable thirst of accumulation, often went during the silent lonely hours of the night, and gazed wistfully through the dangerous gateway to the ruins of his father's observatory, in which, as he believed, vast treasures had been lost. Prepared for this, Daniel took his station behind the main-door of the audience-hall, and watched for the Baron, who, towards midnight, came accordingly. The steward advanced with noiseless steps, and was close up to him just as he stood on the verge of the dreadful chasm. Wolfgang turned suddenly round, and at once reading a murderous intention in the visage of this accursed menial, he cried out, " Daniel—Daniel—what art thou about here at such an hour ?" The steward, however, made him no an-

swer, but, with the fury of a tiger, rushed forward, and struck his unfortunate victim with such violence, that he fell instantly over the broken wall into the fathomless abyss!

So dreadfully agitated was Baron Hubert by this event, that he could not enjoy, afterwards, one moment's tranquillity at the castle, but went to his property in Courland, and came only once a-year, in the autumn, to Rolandsitten. Old Francis, the faithful chasseur, alone seemed to suspect the steward's enormous guilt, and, in after years, when the murderer was dead, used to maintain that his ghost walked in the great hall at the time of every full-moon, describing its appearance and conduct, of all which Winkler himself became at last an eye-witness, but Providence vouchsafed him the power of overcoming and banishing this detestable *revenant*.

Thus my uncle drew to an end of his story, and at this point, taking my hand, with tears in his eyes, "Nephew—nephew," said he in a faltering voice, "She, too,—your beautiful friend Celestina, has fallen a victim to that mysterious destiny—to those dark and irresistible powers

who have established their throne and empire in the castle of Rolandsitten! Two days after we set out from hence, on our journey thither, the Baron, by way of a *finale* to the sports of that year, proposed an excursion on sledges. Of course he himself drove the Baroness, and it seemed scarcely credible that any accident could happen. However, when they were moving with great rapidity down hill, the horses took fright, and ran away with such fury, that it was impossible either to stop them or get out of the carriage. "The ghost—the ghost—the horrible old man is behind us!" screamed the Baroness; and just as she uttered these words the sledge was overturned, she was thrown to some distance, and though the party who followed thought it was improbable that she had received much injury, yet their attempts to restore her were in vain; —she never spoke nor opened her eyes, but expired in a few moments. As for the Baron, he still lives, but has renounced all intercourse with this world, and will not even complain. His composure and silence are like the mood of a dying man, to whom no aid can be rendered. Nephew, we shall never more ride together to Rolandsitten!"

Here my uncle paused; and I left him with a heavy heart, insomuch that time only, whose power no traces, however deep, can wholly withstand, enabled me to look with calmness on the circumstances that he had now laid before me. For several days, indeed, I was in a state more than bordering on distraction, and had almost determined on putting an end to my own life, if grief alone did not bring about the same result; but my uncle's relapse into his former illness, gave me duties to fulfil, and not long afterwards he died.

Many years had passed away, and I was an exile from my own country; for in the confusion of the war by which Germany was devastated, I was hunted from one place to another, always moving northwards, till I found myself at Petersburg. At length when the times permitted me to visit my native land, and I was driving along the sea shore, not far from Königsberg, in a gloomy evening, though the season was now summer, I was surprised by seeing on the horizon, what appeared to me a star of extraordinary magnitude. After some time, I perceived that

it was no star, but rather a large fire burning fiercely, though Courland being so flat a country, I was much puzzled to account for its elevated situation. "Hark you, comrade," said I to the postillion, "what great fire is that which we see yonder." "*Euer Gnaden*,"—answered the lad, "it is the reflecting lamp in the light-tower at Rolandsitten." No sooner had he pronounced this name, than every incident of that mysterious autumn, on which I had long ceased to reflect, revived in my mind, as if all had happened but yesterday. Once more I beheld Celestina,—the Baron,—the mysterious aunts in their antediluvian dresses;—I saw myself, too, as I had then appeared in the dusky old mirror,—with my childish vacant physiognomy,—my sky blue coat, and my hair so frizzed and powdered, white as a miller's hat! Sombre as my reflections were, yet such is the motley texture of one's thoughts—I could scarcely help laughing when I remembered the part of a sighing lover which I had then assumed, and the jokes which my uncle used to play off against me.

Under these mixed feelings, I arrived early in the morning at Rolandsitten, and, in the house at

which my carriage stopped, recognized that of the land steward, for whom I directly inquired, in the same terms which I should have used near twenty years ago. "With submission," said the clerk of the post-house, taking his pipe from his mouth, and touching his cap; "there is here no land steward—this is a public office, belonging to our gracious sovereign. As to the *herr amstrath*, he is at home, to be sure; but is still fast asleep." On farther inquiry, I learned that sixteen years had elapsed since Baron Roderick von Rolandsitten, the last proprietor, had died, without leaving any representatives; so that, in terms of his grandfather's deed of entail, the property had now fallen to the crown. I walked up to see the castle, but found only a heap of ruins; and, as an old *bauer* whom I met in the woods informed me, great part of the stones had been used for building the light-house. This man was also quite prepared on the subject of the ghost, of which he had often been told when the castle yet stood; and he assured me that no one could pass there at midnight, if the moon were at full, without hearing, even at this date, most hideous and unearthly lamentations.

Poor short-sighted Baron Roderick! with all thy

laborious drawing up of horoscopes, and thy consultations, forsooth, with the stars in Heaven, where was thy worldly wisdom? Instead of securing thy descendants more firmly than ever in their large possessions, the result of thy boasted schemes was but to provoke a hostile and resistless destiny, by which all their short-lived pleasures were embittered, and they were destroyed one after another, till the race was utterly extinct.

GEORGE SELDING.

BY

CAROLINE PICHLER.

GEORGE SELDING.

CHAPTER I.

——So the fire-works were burned out, and the *fête champetre* was at an end! The scene of these short-lived joys was filled with a dense black smoke, and the company all prepared for departure. The valets shouted for the different carriages—the coachmen's voices were as loud in return—the riders galloped about, terrifying the foot-passengers, while the torches that were intended to give aid, rather increased the confusion, by the flickering shadows that were cast from the trees.

In the midst of this bustle, there was heard, all of a sudden, a lamentable shriek; for a coach, in which there were three ladies, had struck on the

root of a tree—had lost a wheel, and was, of course, overturned. The horses reared, and threatened to run away, while the by-standers, instead of rendering assistance, provided for their own safety, and dispersed in every direction. At that moment, a young man, remarkably well mounted, galloped up, threw himself from his horse, seized the reins, (for the coachman was unable to attend his duty,) and, as soon as he had secured the furious animals, so that no farther accident could occur, he hastened to extricate the ladies.

A handsome young girl was the first to throw herself into George Selding's arms, and he carried her gently and safely to a bank of mossy turf. Meanwhile, others had been shamed out of their neglect, and had assisted an elderly lady out of the carriage; but, when Selding returned, there was a third sufferer, whose situation had been the most awkward, having been undermost in the overturn, though she had not uttered one word of complaint. She was a tall, slim, and yet very graceful figure, who, without the interference of any one, had raised herself to the coach-door, then would only accept of his arm to enable her to jump down from the steps. When they had cleared the

crowd round the carriage, she thanked him cordially, and in a tone of sincere gratitude, for his attention. Her voice was so soft and engaging, that he wished earnestly to continue the conversation; but she joined her two friends, who talked loudly enough of the adventure they had encountered, and attracted notice from all the by-standers. When Selding came up, they united in overpowering him with thanks, and with praise of his readiness and politeness.

From their language and manner, he perceived that they were persons of good rank, and rejoiced at having made their acquaintance, more especially when, by the light of the passing torches, he convinced himself that the young lady whom he had first rescued was truly beautiful. Even the elderly matron had yet more than the remains of great personal attractions.

In short, Selding was quite delighted with this whole rencontre; and as the carriage was, for the present, *hors de combat*, it was agreed that the party should walk home together. Of course, Selding offered himself as an escort, for the servants must be left behind to look after the broken equipage. He gave his right arm to the old la-

dy; her daughter (for such appeared to be the relationship) took the other; the silent girl followed,—still as silent as before,—and so they proceeded through the woods. Luckily, the moon, which had been till now invisible, broke out, illumining the quiet romantic landscape;—the beauty's soft hand rested confidentially on Selding's arm; and when he spoke, he caught, by the silvery light, the glance of her eye, beaming kindly and encouragingly on him. This unexpected acquaintance, that seemed even at first like old friendship,—the mild pleasant weather,—the deep stillness that reigned around them,—all contributed to rouse in Selding's mind an extraordinary mood of imagination. When at last they had arrived at the ladies' house, he would have taken leave, but was requested to walk in and partake of a *petit souper*. This offer was far too agreeable to his feelings to be refused, and Selding was accordingly shown into a very handsomely furnished saloon, with tall glass doors, opening into a garden, and admitting the soft moonlight and fragrance of rich exotic flowers, so that his first visit was made under the most promising auspices. A servant brought candles, and the party sat down. The

tall silent girl, however, after a few words whispered in her ear by the elder lady, immediately withdrew; and then followed by degrees, mutual questions and disclosures of title and rank. Selding found that he was in the house of a widow, whose name was not unknown to him, for she had been married to a distinguished civil officer at Vienna; Louisa, the gay blooming young lady, was her daughter, and the other, who appeared so timid and reserved, her niece. The ladies, in their turn, ascertained that Selding was the only son of a rich banker; that he had been abroad on his travels, and had returned a few weeks ago, in order to take the management of his father's business, who died during his absence. So they conversed together very cordially for about an hour. Amelia, the niece, came now and then into the room, seeming to have the management of household affairs; and, at last, refreshments were placed on the table. Louisa did the honours, and endeavoured, not without success, to make herself agreeable, while her cousin, as before, scarcely spoke. The old lady was also somewhat reserved, but Selding and Lousia found so much to say, that he was astonished when twelve o'clock struck, and

warned him that it was time to depart. He apologized for having remained so late,—was kindly invited to repeat his visit, and, full of self-congratulation and flattering hopes, he pursued his way homewards by the pleasant moonlight.

In the course of the next day, he did not fail to make inquiries among his acquaintances on the subject which was now more interesting to him than any other,—that of the character and circumstances of his new friend Madam von Fernburg. He found that this lady, before her husband's death, had been accustomed to a life of much gaiety and expence; they had a very large house, and kept up a grand establishment. Of late years, however, being restricted to a narrow income, she had voluntarily retired from the world, still cherishing hopes that the beauty of her daughter Louisa might attract some rich admirer, and that, by her marriage, the family might be restored to the circles in which they had been accustomed to move. Selding heard this last inuendo with indifference, believing such reports only in so far as it suited his own humour; and, in a few days, he went again to pay his *devoirs* at Madam von Fernburg's villa.

He was received politely, and with evident satisfaction. It was evening, and a small party happened to be already assembled. Some card-tables were placed in a garden saloon, while the young people amused themselves wandering about through the beautiful avenues. At length, as the air grew chill, and twilight declined, the tables were removed into the house; where Louisa seated herself at the piano-forte, and delighted every one, but most of all Selding, by her voice and musical execution. Such evening parties afterwards took place frequently, till, by degrees, the young banker felt himself quite at home in the house, and the ladies began to look on him more as a confidential friend or relation, than a stranger. He was always chosen for their companion when they drove out. Madame von Fernburg used then to sit on one side, Selding on the other, and Louisa in the middle. In this manner they were accustomed to appear in the *Prater*, and all other favourite resorts of the *beau monde*, from which Louisa could never long remain absent. Two months passed away in this agreeable intercourse, during which time Selding became more and more deeply in love.

Louisa seemed to treat him with great kindness; her mother kept aloof with a degree of *hauteur*, that might be, perhaps, more affected than real. Only one circumstance rather vexed our hero, which was, that not the slightest precaution had been taken to conceal the circumstances in which he now stood with regard to the family. Such happiness as he enjoyed, from the favour shown to him, would have been heightened tenfold, if a veil of mystery had been thrown over his pleasures; his delicacy was hurt, because others did not enter into these feelings, and he began to reflect seriously on his present situation, and what his prospects were for the future. The plan of offering Louisa his hand, and of sharing with her his weal and woe for the rest of his life, had no doubt many attractions; but he would not act rashly; he wished of course to ascertain, whether the young lady, with whom he was to enter into this indissoluble engagement, really possessed those qualifications which would render him happy in domestic life. He commenced a system of more watchful observance, and made her undergo several petty trials, of which, of course, the conclusion was favourable, for both the mother and the daugh-

ter perceived at once the aim he had in view, and were on their guard. The result proved, that Louisa's character, was, in short, the very model of all virtues; it was she who kept the house in good order; she made, with her own hands, all her fine dresses; was an affectionate nurse to her aunt, whenever the latter happened to be in bad health; for amusements, dress, and company were all forgotten, if an opportunity occurred for rendering any of her friends a service. Whatever he heard and discovered was favourable to his own wishes, and yet there were certain inexplicable misgivings in his own heart, which prevented him from being perfectly satisfied.

He had been so much occupied with Louisa, that her cousin Amelia had been through the whole time quite neglected. Of her he knew no more than that she seemed a quiet inoffensive girl, who never intruded her society or conversation on any one, but seemed altogether absorbed in her own thoughts or duties. When company came to the villa, she appeared very seldom, never joined her relations in the carriage when they drove out, and never accepted, or indeed received, invitations to balls or banquets. In short, the

part that she played was in the lowest degree humble and subservient. Soon after his first introduction, Selding had been surprised at all this, and had made inquiries. He was answered that she did not like being in a crowd,—that she was averse to society, dress, and amusements, so that the greatest favour in her estimation was to be left quite undisturbed and alone. At last he ceased to ask any farther questions, but one evening when he had finished his letters at the counting-house sooner than usual, and came earlier than he was expected, to visit Louisa, he found that both she and her mother were absent; they had gone to visit an invalid friend. Amelia was sitting alone in the saloon employed on her needle work. She received him with politeness; and he began to talk with her merely for the sake of pastime, for he did not expect much pleasure from such a dialogue. For want of a better subject, he began to praise the work on which she was employed, which happened to be a very fine embroidered gown. "It is for my cousin," said Amelia. Selding felt confused, and the conversation rather flagged. By degrees, however, it was revived, and became in-

teresting; for they talked of the newest literary publications. Amelia knew them all; but it was not merely with title-pages that she was acquainted, she had read the books, and thoroughly understood their contents. Selding was astonished to find such correct judgment and such deep feeling combined with modesty the most retiring and pretensionless. The whole hour that passed away before Louisa came, vanished like a moment, and when at last he was placed as usual with her and her mother, he could not refrain from expressing his astonishment at the good sense and admirable acquirements of Amelia.

Some days after this, on a beautiful autumnal evening, it happened that he came in his open carriage, in order to take the ladies for a drive to the *Prater*. Having arrived there, they alighted, and seated themselves in an arbour, where they soon found that the air was very cool. Louisa, moreover, had left her shawl at home. On this discovery, Selding instantly mounted the box of his phaeton, and drove away to fetch it. On his arrival at the country-house, he went across the outer court towards the saloon. No one observed him; but, from the drawing-

room, there arose sounds of music so delightful, that they completely rivetted his attention. He heard the piano-forte played, perhaps, with less artificial skill than that with which Louisa could have touched it—but with a degree of expression and feeling, to which she, however, would have been wholly unequal. With the notes, at last mingled a gentle *contre alt* voice,—and a song followed, of which both the words and the melody were to Selding quite irresistible. He was all ear—all sensibility. When the tones had declined away, he stepped nearer, and now, in the twilight of departing day, which, contending with the moon, shone with a mysterious effect into the room, he saw Amelia sitting at the piano-forte. Her eyes were uplifted as in prayer,—they were suffused with tears, in which the moonlight shone reflected. Her fingers glided over the keys, and seemed to express the echo of those feelings which had passed through her mind. For a while Selding remained stedfastly gazing at her. He found that her features had a power and tenderness of expression, which, though she was not a regular beauty, made her highly attractive. Her figure and carriage, too, were very graceful, and

he could not imagine how all this should have till now escaped his observation. At last he softly retired, then advanced for the second time with quick steps, as if he had only just then arrived. Amelia started up from her chair, and came to meet him, visibly embarrassed. Selding, too, was rather confused, and explained the commission on which he had come, awkwardly enough—however, she went and brought him the shawl. When he had taken it in his hand, and should have gone, he lingered, looking at her anxiously, as if he had still somewhat to say. At last he stammered out—"I know not if I should venture to confess to you that I have been very impolite; yet I am by no means disposed to repent of my conduct." Amelia seemed astonished. "I listened when you could have no presentiment that any one was near you, and heard the most beautiful, the most divine music!" She blushed deeply, "That was not fair—that was not what I should have expected from you, Herr von Selding." "It is but too true," answered he, "and I have to beg your forgiveness—yet I cannot repent what I have done, since it has convinced me of what I had long suspected, that

you are possessed of many accomplishments which you carefully conceal." Now he proceeded with an ardour, which evidently was heartfelt, and not the result of ordinary *politesse*, to express his admiration, till he perceived that Amelia, whose hand he had held all the while, trembled, and that she seemed agitated to a degree which he had by no means expected. She answered him timidly in as few words as possible, and begged of him to begone, as Louisa would wonder what detained him. At last he obeyed, taking leave by kissing her hand respectfully, and returned to the ladies in the *Prater*. They had been exceedingly perplexed by his long absence; he related freely and without disguise what had occurred; and it was obvious that they were much disconcerted by his confession. Louisa thought proper to complain of a bad cold which she had caught by being so long exposed to the frosty air without her shawl; her mother seemed lost in reflection. Selding, too, was more silent than usual, and occupied with his own thoughts;—they soon returned home, and after this adventure, Amelia was less than ever seen in the household.

The poor girl, from the very first moment in

which Selding came to extricate her from the coach, had been prepossessed in his favour, and henceforward could never forget him. His agreeable person—his cultivated understanding—still more, that unequivocal goodness of heart which was manifest in every feature and every tone of his voice, had awoke kindred chords in her mind, and she felt that, with this man for a husband, she could have been unspeakably happy, though it was already certain that he was lost to her for ever. Every one must have observed that he loved her cousin, and even if she could sometimes have doubted this, Louisa took care to mark by her conduct that she looked on Selding as her accepted wooer—almost as a betrothed husband. What greatly increased her sorrow, was the probability that Selding, in his estimate of Louisa's character, had been completely deceived, and would never arrive at that happiness in the married state which he no doubt expected. She had formed a thousand plans for warning him without betraying herself—but she was obliged to give up all of them in despair. She saw, with great pain, that she could not here be of any service whatever, and bore with this cause of sorrow, like many others which she was obliged to endure in

her aunt's house, without a murmur. Already she began to feel a melancholy kind of composure in these thoughts, when the scene at the piano-forte, and the admiration which Selding had obviously betrayed, once more raised a tempest of conflicting emotions in her breast, which nights of watching, and floods of tears, were not sufficient to allay.

Selding, meanwhile, had not the most distant suspicion of what he had done. He merely contemplated Amelia (when she did appear,) with increased interest, and drew comparisons betwixt her and Louisa, which did not always turn out in favour of the latter. It happened, before long, that Louisa made her appearance in a new and very tasteful dress, which was much admired, and every one praised both the richness of the silk, and the fashion in which it was made. "All this is Louisa's own work," said Madame von Fernburg; "she is her own milliner and embroiderer!" Selding's attention was roused—he examined the dress more narrowly—thought he remembered it; and, in a few moments, became convinced that it was the very same on which he had seen Amelia at work a few days before. This detection of a downright

falsehood vexed him exceedingly; he was all that evening out of humour, and, for the future, continued more than ever on the watch, so that circumstances were observed, which otherwise would have escaped him altogether. In Louisa he found pretension to accomplishments which she did not possess, while her mother betrayed selfish views, with a good share of vanity, and worldly-minded ostentation. His heart, therefore; became gradually colder towards them; and, in proportion as this mood gained ground, he became, of course, more inclined to think favourably of Amelia. For two days, the latter did not at all make her appearance; but as she had often absented herself before now, this did not disturb him, till the second evening, when he inquired anxiously what had become of her? "Oh the poor girl!" and "poor Amelia!" answered Madame von Fernburg, and Louisa in the same breath, giving to their tone as much of sympathizing interest as they were able.

Selding was terrified. "What means this?" said he; "what has happened to her?" "She was employed yesterday morning to bring some heavy lumber out of the store-room," said Louisa; "the bundle was rather large; she could not see

the steps, and so fell down stairs." "But the hurt was very trifling," added Madame von Fernburg; "only a sprained ancle, for which reason, out of precaution, I would not let her rise to-day."

Selding was indeed much struck with this incident, and did not make any attempt to conceal the impression that it had made on him. Accordingly, the mother and daughter perceived at once the line of conduct which they must now adopt. They could not have concealed the accident—they dared not cross the young man in his present humour,—and therefore began to praise Amelia for her good nature and readiness to give, in their house, all the assistance of which she was capable, and so forth. On Selding, however, these words were thrown away; for all the while he was contemplating, "in his mind's eye," the poor Amelia falling down stairs with her heavy burden; and this image blended strangely with the well-remembered scene at the piano-forte, in the lonely drawing-room by moonlight. He began to comprehend the real circumstances under which she was situated in this house, and to reflect what might be the sufferings of a poor orphan beneath the roof of wealthy relations, so that an earnest wish to assist her was

now added to other feelings which had gradually and unawares obtained an influence over his heart.

At present, he offered to send his own surgeon, who was one of the most celebrated in Vienna, and they thought themselves obliged to accept this offer with an appearance of great thankfulness. Selding proposed to shorten his visit, in order that the doctor might arrive as soon as possible. They considered this unnecessary; but he followed his own plans, and went accordingly. Within an hour, the surgeon came with Selding's valet, who was ordered to bring back information to his master; and the accounts received were quite satisfactory.

Next morning, however, he sent again, and about twelve o'clock arrived himself, when he was given to understand that the whole affair was a mere bagatelle, unworthy of the notice that had been taken of it. He was piqued at this reproof, so directly aimed at himself, and became silent. Louisa pouted—the mother looked displeased—and his visit was much shorter than usual.

In a few days, Amelia was allowed to make her appearance, and Selding expressed the utmost pleasure at seeing her—tried to lead her into conversation—and insisted on hearing the particulars

of her late accident, not being in the least disconcerted, though Madame von Fernburg and Louisa both looked offended by his conduct. Now, as on former occasions, there were numberless household commissions which Amelia was forced to execute. She was constantly ordered to go hither and thither, nor did any one seem to remark that so much walking must be both painful and injurious. This appeared to Selding in the highest degree cruel and unjust—he started up several times to bring what was wanted, and spare Amelia her trouble. A grateful look from the poor girl was his reward; but, ere long, some orders were given in a whisper, in consequence of which, she was obliged to remain the whole evening out of the room, so that, for this visit, Selding saw no more of her.

The next was Louisa's birth-day, and, like all other anniversaries in this house, it was celebrated in the presence of a large party. On account of the very beautiful weather, there was to be this time a grand *dejeuné à la fourchette* in the garden, at which the guests appeared in their gayest attire, and were exceedingly merry, while Louisa figured in a brilliant dress as the queen of the

festival. Amelia was, as usual, much employed, and was ordered to run, times without number, to and fro between the house and the garden, so that, notwithstanding all her cousin's charms, heightened as they now were by her splendid apparel, it was impossible to fetter Selding's attention, even for a moment, so as to prevent his feeling more than ever for the distresses of the humble and submissive orphan. He could not help admiring the steady composure with which she fulfilled every task, and the self-command with which she concealed her sufferings from the party. From him, however, they were not concealed, and he took every opportunity of smoothing her difficulties as far as it lay in his power; but Louisa kept him so incessantly occupied by directing all her discourse to him, that once it escaped his notice, when Madame von Fernburg had sent her to the house for a rare exotic plant, which had been one of Selding's birth-day presents, and which some of the party expressed a wish to see. At last, when he chanced to look round, Amelia was tottering down the front steps with an immense flower-pot in her arms, which was evidently more than she could bear. He started, and ran to

assist her; took the flower-pot, which he supported on his left arm, while, with his right hand, he led her gracefully down stairs. She looked at him;—surprise, gratitude, and somewhat of a yet more tender feeling shone from her eyes. "How can I sufficiently thank you?" said she, in a low soft tone, while a deep blush came over her features. That look penetrated into Selding's heart;—he could not help pressing her hand, and he was aware that she trembled. When they rejoined the party, he brought her a chair, and said, in a voice that Madame von Fernburg could not but overhear—"Now, Mademoiselle Amelia, I must insist, that, for the rest of this day, you will sit still and spare yourself. If any more commissions are to be executed, you will be so good as to call on some of your next neighbours. Every one of the party will, I am sure, feel himself delighted, if, by this means, he can render *you* any service." At these words, Madame von Fernburg bit her lips; Louisa darted at him a look of contemptuous rage, but endeavoured to play her part as if quite unconcerned, and drew a circle round her for a game at questions and forfeits, while, during the bustle

which this occasioned, Amelia seized the opportunity to retire unobserved. Selding, however, had remained on the watch, and as soon as she quitted her place, was ready to offer his arm, and walk with her. As they advanced, he saw by a stolen glance, that tears glistened in her eyes; he caught her hand, and pressed it fervently to his heart. She was again much agitated; but Selding ascribed this only to her natural timidity, and the painful impresssion of the scenes that she had so lately encountered. When they had entered the saloon, however, and he was about to retire, a deadly paleness came over her countenance; she tottered, and would have fainted, had he not caught her in his arms, and carried her to a sofa in Louisa's *boudoir*. Blushing, and utterly confounded, Amelia could not speak, but, at that moment, it was evident from her looks that she loved him, and after this silent confession, she could not help bursting into tears. "My dearest Amelia," said Selding, "be assured that I am fully aware of your hard fate in the world; but you may believe also, that not only do I thus feel deeply for your situation, but will try every means in my power to relieve you from it." He had

again taken her hand, but she now drew it back, and wept more passionately. "I thank you, Herr von Selding," said she at last, in a faltering voice; "I am, indeed, deeply sensible of your generosity and goodness of heart; but you do not know the consequences of your absence just now from my aunt's party, and I beg that you will not speak to me any more—nay, I implore that you will go!"—Sobs here impeded her utterance. Selding felt dreadfully agitated; he was about to answer, but she hid her face in her handkerchief, and made a sign, by a wave of her hand, that he must leave her. He obeyed at last, though with great reluctance, and returned to the garden perplexed and *distrait*.

As for Amelia, her feelings were at this moment almost insupportably painful. Thrown off her guard by his tender and respectful attentions, she had given way to the impulses of her own heart—she had betrayed to him her prepossession in his favour, almost as plainly as any language could have expressed it—and now, instead of meeting with reciprocal affection, she heard only assurances of his compassion and generous sympathy for her distresses. Shame, wounded

pride, and unrequited affection, were emotions that she could not endure; she would have wished to fly from her present abode, and hide herself from him, and from all the world for ever. How could she bear in future the sight of that man, to whom she had revealed all the deepest mysteries of her own heart, and who had treated her in return with pity, which, alas! is almost ever allied to contempt! She was altogether mistaken, however, for Selding really loved her; but this pure and rational attachment was so different in character from that which he had hitherto felt for Louisa, that he himself was yet unaware of the truth, and had formed no estimate how very dear Amelia had become to him, till mere chance fanned up the concealed embers into flame.

For a long time Amelia had indeed suffered much from the persecution and mortifications to which she was subjected in her aunt's house. The latter had promised to take into protection her orphan niece, and to treat her like a favourite daughter; instead of which, the poor girl's life had been more unhappy than that of an ordinary servant; therefore the design of leaving her present residence had been long familiar to her mind;

and it was now become her fixed resolve to put her scheme as soon as possible into execution. Though she had indeed no fortune, yet she was very certain of her own capacity to obtain a livelihood by needle-work, or by giving instructions, so that, although in narrow circumstances, she might still be independent. No suitable opportunity, however, had yet occurred for carrying such designs into execution; and though she had a guardian, —a man of good character, and the strictest integrity, yet, as she knew that he was not affluent, she could not, consistently with her feelings of delicacy, resolve at once to leave her aunt's house. After she had met with Selding, too, perhaps the wish to be near to him had more influence in detaining her, than she herself was aware of; but, meanwhile, she made the utmost exertions, not only to fulfil all her duties, but even to exceed the measure of labour imposed on her, in order that she might, by this means, compensate to these cold-hearted friends for any favours that they bestowed on her, which otherwise she could not have accepted from them. Quite unexpectedly, however, Madame von Fernburg began of her own accord to speak of Amelia's removal; she ap-

peared to wish for it, and said openly, that, as her daughter's marriage was now to take place in a short time, and she would give up keeping house on her own account, it would be impossible for her to offer accommodation to her niece any longer. She suggested, therefore, that the latter should look round her for a suitable place, as a governess, or companion to a lady of fortune; and she herself tried to effect this purpose, by writing letters to Amelia's guardian: in short, the unhappy girl felt that they were most anxious for her departure. She could not fail to guess the cause of all this, and perhaps a slight feeling of triumph, and of contempt for these narrow-minded and selfish relations, lessened in some measure the sufferings which their unkindness might otherwise have caused. Such were her situation and prospects, when that adventure happened on Louisa's birth day, and from this moment onwards, her resolution was unalterably fixed. The painful feelings of conflicting love and offended pride, which weighed on her existence, and almost wore out the springs of life, overbalanced all cautious reflections; she determined, at every risk, to leave

her aunt's house, and cut off, for ever more, the possibility of a meeting with Selding. Under the pressure of these emotions, she wrote to her guardian, and conjured him by all that he held most dear and sacred, instantly to take measures for her removal, and that he would now afford her that asylum in his house, which he had long before offered. Her letter betrayed so evidently the disordered and irritated state of her mind, that the worthy man became quite alarmed for the safety of his ward, suspecting that she must have been treated with the greatest harshness. Of course, he agreed to her proposal, and sent her the address of a friend in Vienna, who intended setting out in a few days for Prague, (his own place of residence,) and who would conduct Amelia safely thither. He added, in the kindest manner, that in his family, she would not fail to meet with all the affection and care which she had a good right to expect from her aunt, though in that quarter she had been so cruelly disappointed. Quite rejoiced on the arrival of this letter, she hastened with it to Madame von Fernburg, who was also so well satisfied, to be rid on any

terms of a rival who stood in her daughter's way, that she provided, at her own expence, all requisites for Amelia's comfort on the journey, which was appointed to take place on the third day after this conversation.

CHAPTER II.

SELDING still cherishing those impressions which his last meeting with Amelia had produced, and firmly determined that he would break off all intercourse with Louisa, had continued his visits however,—though with intentions very different from those which he had formerly entertained. Amelia, meanwhile, never once appeared. Her late accident still afforded her a pretext for keeping to her own room, and thus she avoided all risk of meeting with her lover. Madame von Fernburg was by no means displeased, if her niece's sprained ancle, which, through the day, did not in the least hinder her attention to household duties, regularly became worse at night, so that she was obliged to confine herself; and Selding alone felt bitterly the absence of a beloved object, who, since that decisive interview, had become every hour more and more dear to him. In such

manner, several days passed over, and he found himself obliged to undertake a journey of considerable length, on account of business, which had already been too long delayed. Amelia knew this, and had reckoned on the event of his absence for the execution of her own plans.

The day before his departure, he thought himself sure of seeing her yet once more, but she did not appear; he therefore laid aside all reserve, and begged of Louisa that she would obtain for him an interview with her cousin, as he could not think of leaving Vienna, to be absent for several days, perhaps weeks, without having taken leave of Mademoiselle Amelia. Louisa seemed in exceedingly bad humour; she rose, however, and went to deliver Selding's message. Amelia was much embarrassed; she could not with propriety refuse the request now made to her, though she trembled at the thoughts of any meeting with Selding; most of all, however, at a *tête-à-tête*. She chose of two difficulties what seemed the least, and went with Louisa into the saloon. Selding hastened to meet her, but he was terrified at the paleness of her complexion, and the expression of melancholy which prevailed in her

whole demeanour. With the most heart-felt anxiety, he made inquiries after her health, and betrayed his affection so unequivocally, that Louisa and her mother, were exasperated to the utmost degree, and Amelia became so confused and distressed, that her answers were cold, forced, and awkward. Even Selding at last was silent, though, as to the terror which she felt, he knew nothing of it, nor had he any suspicion of that attachment, which she thought, had been fully made known at their last interview. On the contrary, he suffered cruelly from the belief, that she was by no means so favourably disposed towards him as formerly.

Selding had already been two days absent when the letter arrived from Amelia's guardian, and she immediately made preparations to leave all her present connections for ever. In spite of her prudent resolves, this step cost her far more pain than she had expected. The night before her departure was spent sleepless, and in tears. She thought there might possibly have been some misunderstanding, that ought to have been cleared up, and repented her rashness now when it was too late. So, in due time, her carriage was brought to the

door; she departed, and had been received with great kindness in her guardian's house, long before Selding's return to Vienna, who little suspected the change that had taken place in his absence.

Of course, his first visit, after he arrived, was to the house of Madame von Fernburg. Timid and reserved, as a true lover must ever be, he abstained for some time from inquiring after Amelia, but was every moment in hopes that she would enter the room, or that he might catch a glimpse of her well-known form gliding through the garden. The mother and daughter did not fail to observe his emotion, and to guess the cause of it; besides, they had a malicious pleasure in waiting for his questions, and in the anticipation of his surprise and disappointment. In this they were not deceived. When the truth actually came upon him, he was at first so thunder-struck, that he could not articulate one word. This astonishment, however, was so rapidly succeeded by indignation, and suspicions (but too well-founded) of the plans that had been adopted against him, that if they could have read what passed in his mind, their triumph would have been of very short duration.

In truth, he more than suspected all that had

occurred. He had no doubt that her flight, had been the result of constraint and violence on their part, and was most anxious to learn where she had taken refuge. He felt also that he himself had been, in all probability, the cause of Amelia's present sufferings, and this apprehension was, to his generous heart, almost insupportable. Self-reproach, anger, love, and pity, conflicted in his mind. He was now fully aware of his own attachment to Amelia—he became conscious that he could not live without her—and that he must discover, at all risks, the place of her retirement, even if he were to set out for this purpose, like one of the knights of the olden time, and rely on mere chance for his success. That she was really living in the house of her guardian at Prague, he did not believe, for at this time he distrusted all that was said to him; but that this person might know what had become of her seemed very probable; and, in the first place, he determined to make a trial in that quarter. His love for Amelia was such that it even rendered him prudent. He spoke so cautiously with Madame von Fernburg, that he obtained all the information he wished for as to her niece's guardian, without betraying to her what

he now intended to do. But, on the following morning, at an early hour, his post-horses were in readiness, and in a little time, he was far on his way to the Polish frontiers.

Arrived at Prague, he hastened instantly to the house, of which he had already received a description; but as to the question, whether Amelia was really living here,—it was one which he never thought of asking, so thoroughly was he convinced that he had been misinformed on that point. He, therefore, only said to the maid-servant that he wished to speak with her master for a few minutes, on particular business. While she went up stairs, he walked without ceremony into a parlour below, of which the door stood open, and the first object that met his eyes here was Amelia, who started up, with a half-suppressed shriek, from her tambour-frame,—then stood at the table motionless like a statue.

Selding, too, was confounded, but joy prevailed over all other sensations. "Amelia!" cried he, in a tone of rapture, and advancing with open arms, "you are indeed here! I have found again that happiness which seemed lost to me for ever!" "Herr von Selding," said she, endeavour-

ing, but in vain, to speak in a firm voice, "to what extraordinary accident am I indebted for this visit?" "There has been no accident," said he, drawing nearer, and taking her hand, which he respectfully pressed to his lips; "I sought for you—I would have sought all the world through till I had the delight of thus meeting again—and for your sake alone I have come hither." She looked at him doubtfully—a rapturous but transient gleam of hope awoke in her mind—her timid eyes encountered his, and she wished to have said a few words dictated by her own feelings; but all at once the form of Louisa seemed to glide into the room, and stand threatening before her. "Herr von Selding," said she, with all the composure that she was able to assume, "you are the betrothed bride of my cousin!" He frowned darkly, and let her hand drop. "Is this all," answered he, "that you have to say to me after our long separation?" She was silent, and he added, "I was never betrothed to your cousin, and I never shall be so!" "Nay," answered Amelia, "must I think, then, that all her own assertions were unfounded? Have I not heard——" "I know not," interrupted Selding, "what Louisa may

have said to you. As a man, whose honour and integrity have never been impeached, I can affirm that I have not even made to her any declaration of attachment. I do not deny that I admired your cousin at the commencement of our acquaintance; but as to real affection, it was then a feeling unknown to my heart. Through my whole life, I have never loved but once," added he, with great fervour, "and I well know, Amelia, that I shall never love any one but you!" Amelia's heart was too full to allow of her returning any answer—she could not look up, and tears fell fast through her long silken eyelashes. Selding thought, but was not sure, that she returned his cordial pressure of the hand. He honoured this timidity, and wished that she should have time for recollection:—meanwhile he ventured to add, "Amelia, dare I cherish hopes at least, that you—that you do not hate me?" At these words her eyes were raised, and met the full and radiant expression of love that shone in his looks—her doubts and hesitation were at once conquered,—she sank into his arms. "Augustus—dear Augustus!" cried she; but this was all that she could say, and her tears flowed unceasingly. Augustus was Selding's

Christian name; she had never heard it pronounced aloud by himself, or by any one, though she had used it often in soliloquy;—and the tone of these few syllables was enough—they spoke volumes to his heart. "Will you then be mine?" cried he, "will you consent to share in my fortunes?" "Herr von Selding," said she, again assuming composure, "the time since you first became acquainted with me has been far too short—you cannot yet have judged fairly of my character. For this reason, and because I am not wholly mistress of my own actions, I dare not answer your question." "Dearest Amelia," said he, "I must not be too violent or impatient,—but I have had ample proofs in your aunt's house,—that with you, any man who was not utterly depraved would be happy. I know that I myself would be unspeakably blest. It is true indeed, that you have had no sufficient experience whether my character is good or bad, and, in your aunt's society, I may have often appeared worse than I really am. But, Amelia, believe me, I am not *very* wicked,—nor need you be afraid to trust yourself to my care."

At this moment they heard steps in the anti-

room, and before Amelia could recover any appearance of tranquillity, her guardian entered, expecting to find only the stranger who had requested an audience. Selding took her hand, and led her forward to meet their venerable host, who, after a short explanation, understood, to his own great satisfaction, the connection existing between his beloved ward, and the young prosperous banker. Only a few days more were required to remove that objection which Amelia had started, namely, the want of sufficient time for Selding to convince himself that he did not choose his wife rashly, and without a proper knowledge of her temper and disposition. All doubts, however, were soon cleared away; they were both in love; their confidence in each other was unbounded; and they could not imagine it possible that any circumstance could ever disturb that perfect harmony which at present existed between them.

Along with Amelia's guardian, Selding now made all the requisite arrangements for his future mode of life. The good old man, whose heart had been completely won by our hero's open and honourable conduct, expressed his triumph and delight at being able to entrust her worldly

welfare into such good hands,—and before a month had elapsed, the happy lovers were publicly betrothed. Selding went to Vienna, in order to make due preparations for the reception of his intended bride, and as soon as this business was over, he came back to Prague,—the marriage was solemnized,—a fortnight after which, to the astonishment of all the beau monde, and the unspeakable vexation of Madame von Fernburg and Louisa, he made his appearance with his young wife in the Austrian capital.

Louisa and her mother were immediately on the alert, aided by all the aunts and cousins, with other *soi disant* friends, who used to visit at their house, and began industriously to spread the most wicked and malicious reports against Amelia. Not only did they wish to destroy her character, and that of her husband, in public estimation, but they laid some very sagacious plans for stirring up domestic dissension between their unconscious victims—all which endeavours, however, proved completely abortive. Amelia was, indeed, not a little discomposed and alarmed at these proceedings; but she had always loved retirement, and there was nothing she now wished for so much as to be forgotten by, and for-

get the world, and to live only for her dear Augustus. He also was enraptured with this mode of life. Their conversation, when left alone, seemed quite inexhaustible, for their acquaintance, properly speaking, had lasted only six weeks; yet, before that time, they had so many feelings in unison and sympathy with each other, which had never been imparted! Especially, it was Amelia's delight when she could now freely confess to him, that from the first moment when they were brought together by the overturn of the carriage in the wood—he had not been indifferent to her; how often she had involuntarily envied her cousin, who so little deserved her good fortune. Above all, what had been her feelings that evening when Selding surprised her at the piano-forte, and evinced towards her such unaffected admiration and tender compassion! Selding, on the other hand, had to describe to her how he had first been distressed at the painful situation she endured in her aunt's house—how this emotion had changed into wonder and respect—then into ardent love—and what despair he had to combat at her sudden disappearance, though even this had not been more formidable than her cold reserve on the day

that he came to take leave. So, for this happy couple, the hours flew away like moments. They lived for themselves alone, seeing no company either at home or abroad, unless when it was absolutely indispensable, and cherished delightful visionary hopes that this happiness would last for ever!

CHAPTER III.

At length, as all enjoyments in this world must one day or another lose the zest of novelty, such conversations began, for Selding at least, to become rather less attractive. He now bethought himself of some very worthy and faithful friends, whom he had of course forgotten during the raptures of his honey-moon. He felt that, after the tiresome business of the counting-house had engrossed him through the day, his mind required some variety, some indulgence more *piquant* than the repetition of dialogues to which he had already listened more than a hundred times. He had fully reckoned on Amelia's opinion in this respect being the same with his own; at all events, he felt convinced, that her disposition was far too pliant to admit of any opposition to his wishes. On the contrary, however, she heard the first suggestions of her husband on this subject with a

degree of vexation,—with a kind of instinctive terror and apprehension rather, which was something very different from what he had wished or expected.

She herself had yet felt no blank,—no wish for change; her husband's society was always enough; his presence was to her more than the whole world without him could supply. Meanwhile, in her solitary hours, she combated, as well as she could, the painful impression, which his wish for company had left on her mind. The thought that she might, at all events, contribute to his happiness, overcame every objection. She even did violence to her own sincerity, and put on the mask of cheerfulness, in receiving the guests whom he afterwards brought to the house. Their circle was gradually enlarged, and Selding seemed to take much pleasure in this new mode of life. At first, he had only invited two friends; this number soon multiplied into four; this again into six, and so onwards, till a party of ten or twelve, was the usual complement. At last, one worthy guest was invited to bring his wife, another his sister, and so forth,—till Amelia saw herself involved in female society, which, after the

knowledge of the world which she had gained in her aunt's house, she would gladly have avoided altogether. In return, she was of course invited to parties, which, without being actually rude, she dared not refuse. Refreshments and *petits soupers* were introduced, at which there were always much laughter and merriment, so that the *friends* did not separate till a late hour, and never without making promises for another meeting; while Selding, who was the richest individual among them, found that the agreeable duty of giving the entertainment at his own house, fell to his share oftener than to that of any one else. Amelia was thus betrayed into a vortex, from which she had no means of escaping. Almost with horror, she looked on the contrast made by her present mode of life, with that fairy picture of domestic peace and contentment, on which she had delighted to dwell, and which had been realized indeed, but for a short interval, in order to make her feel with more acuteness the direful reverse of fortune. She strove, but in vain, to banish these sad reflections,—she could not help questioning herself on the causes and probable effects of this change. Every conclusion drawn, added

bitterness to her present discontent, and augmented tenfold the gloom of her prospects for the future. With inexpressible pain and mortification, she was obliged to acknowledge the difference of opinions subsisting betwixt herself and her husband; she could not possibly approve his taste in pleasure; she was quite unable to change her own; and after some faint endeavours to bring him back to his former mode of life, which of course proved in vain, she gave up the point, almost with a feeling of bitter pride in her own consciousness of right, and began to doubt whether he really loved her. She now reflected on the manner in which his acquaintance with her had arisen,—on his former atachment to Louisa, and decided, that it was only the charm of novelty which had any power over his mind. On this principle, she was no longer at any loss to account for the sudden transfer of his affections; for the rash impetuosity with which he had entered into a marriage contract with herself; or, finally, for that irritability and ennui which, alas! he now betrayed, whenever they were left alone together. With a kind of obstinate and triumphant spirit, she persisted in this opinion. To

no one in the world, however, and least of all to her husband, would she have confided these thoughts, by which her own heart was chilled and almost broken; indeed such had been the habits of life to which she had been inured at her aunt's house, of bearing unjust treatment without a murmur, that she did not even wish for a confidant.

Amelia continued, therefore, to suffer in silence; but her temper and mood of mind, even her looks were changed. Her husband perceived all this, and, as kindly as he could, begged her to explain the cause. Convinced as she was that a true lover would never have found it requisite to ask this question, but would have guessed—would have *known* intuitively the source of her melancholy,—quite aware also that if there were in his heart any remains of his former attachment, complaints and reproaches would assuredly extinguish the last glimmering embers, she was on her guard, and would by no means reveal the truth. She had recourse to pretexts and excuses which sounded plausibly enough, promising that she would behave better for the future, and resist that melancholy which had unawares stolen over her.

To all appearance, indeed, she did so. For a few days she forced herself to seem cheerful, and even rejoiced in the thought that, by this means, she had satisfied her husband, whose cold heart had never once suspected the truth; nor did she wish that her sincere and unalterable love should now be known to him.

In a short time after this, she felt aware that she must ere long become a mother; and this prospect, which, if she had been still conscious of possessing Selding's love, would have afforded her the utmost delight, now excited in her mind a strange and harassing conflict of emotion. At intervals, it seemed not wholly impossible that the birth of her child might effect a new bond of union betwixt them; that his declining affection might again be kindled by the natural emotions of a father,—so that a transient gleam of cheerfulness returned;—but in order to cherish these delightful, though faint hopes, which would have been dispersed in the confusion of motley society, —yielding also to her natural disposition to retirement, she began to withdraw more and more from the gay circles which her husband had forced her to encounter. Selding of course remarked

this; he was exceedingly dissatisfied, and remonstrated. On her explaining the cause, however, he seemed at once overjoyed and angry with himself,—he even fell at her feet, and humbly besought her forgiveness; consequently, for a few days, she indulged in the flattering dream, that he indeed loved her as much as ever. But, ere long, she could not help reverting to her old reflections; she considered whether all this appearance of returning affection did not result from the mere zest of novelty;—from the unwonted ideas of the care due to her present situation, and that he would soon be a father; nor did Augustus conduct himself in a manner likely to efface this impression. Though, when they were alone together, his manners were in the utmost degree kind and cordial, yet he was wholly unable to resist for any length of time his inclination for jovial parties and dissipation. That ruinous passion for mixed society soon returned with double force, and as he could not fail to perceive that Amelia's health was such as to preclude her from joining often in his pleasures, he became more and more disposed to think that he had a free right to enjoy them alone. Therefore he used very fre-

quently to leave his own house in the evenings; he did not return till a late hour; and was thus convinced of what would have a little while ago seemed impossible,—that he could find entertainment, and partake of pleasures even in places where Amelia was not, and could not be present. Society always gained on him more and more; for of course a young man of his influence and fortune was a welcome guest in every careless and licentious circle; the bands by which he was detained out of doors became always more powerful, and those of his own fireside weaker; so that his wife's temper and spirits gradually wore out. This last circumstance afforded, of course, no inducement for him to stay at home; and Amelia, fully persuaded that she was in the right, would not in the slightest degree swerve from her own opinions or mode of conduct. Besides, the perfect and thorough conviction, that the last glimmering sparks of affection for her had now died out in her husband's bosom, made her less careful than she had formerly been to disguise her real sentiments. Therefore, when he returned late from his jovial banquets, she received him coldly;—she continued grave and silent. Her

tears indeed were concealed, though she wept incessantly when alone. She did not hide them *now*, from the fear of losing his affection as before, but rather from pride, that he might not see how very dearly she still loved him. Never, therefore, did she allow the slightest word of complaint to escape from her lips; but violent disputes occurred many times about mere trifles, to which she was obliged to have recourse as a pretext, when her bitter vexation could not any longer be subdued; and Selding perceived, to his astonishment, that Amelia was by no means that mild, patient, all-enduring character which she had appeared to him when under the tyrannical power of her aunt.

So then it happened that, step by step, from one dispute to another, these two hearts, that were once so loving, and whose feelings were so completely in unison, became at length altogether hostile and at variance. Selding, vexed and discontented at the discovery he had made, that Amelia, instead of appearing always pliant, complaisant, and cheerful, could persist in being gloomy, cold, and, as he thought, resentful and heartless, was now less willing than ever to stay at his own house; and as he was solely devoted to pleasure,

without one idea of duty or self-control, of course, most of his time was consumed either in the unavoidable care of his counting-house, or in riotous parties.

Among his numerous and motley companions, there was one distinguished from all the rest by his politeness and knowledge of the world, named Benkwitz, a native of Prussia. Selding's attention and good will were particularly attracted by this man, who seemed to him, of all his associates, the person whose acquaintance was most worth cultivating. Benkwitz, however, was at first somewhat reserved in his manner, and the banker's invitations, either to his own house, or to tavern-parties and pleasure gardens, were not always accepted. At last, he seemed as if he were convinced that Selding was a very worthy man, and a cordial friendship was established between them, such as is not often exemplified, and which was, at least on our hero's part, quite unaffected and sincere. He took the first opportunity of communicating to Amelia, what a treasure he had found in the acquaintance of this elegant and accomplished Prussian; but, to his great mortification, he soon perceived that here also, as in so many other in-

stances, her taste was the most opposite that could be imagined to his own. The cold politeness and assumed *maniére* of the stranger, contrasted too strongly with Amelia's straight forward sincerity and real kindness of heart. With a dark foreboding of evil, which she could scarcely have explained to herself, she watched the dominion which this man had obtained over her husband's mind. She thought herself quite certain that Benkwitz had plans in view, which he most carefully concealed under the most specious exterior; and it was not without great effort that she could bring herself to treat him with even common civility.

The first time that she was afterwards alone with Augustus, (which, indeed, now seldom happened,) she spoke with him regarding Benkwitz, and with the utmost caution and delicacy, tried to make him look on this man with at least some share of her own suspicions. Very soon, however, she had the pain of ascertaining, as on many former occasions, that her attempts were altogether fruitless. Her husband's heart was colder and more completely closed against her than ever. At first, he treated her doubts and fears as mere childish caprice, and, at last, he answered her in a chill

sarcastic tone, bordering on harshness, and proving that all her hopes were in vain.

Nor indeed were her evil forebodings as to Benkwitz's character without foundation; for the disposition which Augustus now betrayed to his wife, was in great measure caused by this man's interference. He had not failed to observe the unfavourable impression that he had made on Amelia. He was afraid of her penetrating glances, and watchful care of her husband's welfare; therefore took measures to prepare Selding's mind beforehand, for that expostulation which he had no doubt would take place, and which had happened accordingly. By Selding's own confessions, which were quite unguarded, he had learned the changed state of his new friend's domestic circumstances, had perceived in one moment the real character of the banker and his wife,—on which he did not fail confidently to build his own plans. He contrived to withdraw Selding's affections more and more from Amelia, throwing the conduct of the latter into the darkest possible shade, so that his misrepresentations made a deep impression on a mind already irritated, and the bitterness and distrust between the now miserable couple were every day increased.

At length, however, Amelia became a mother. Exhausted as she was by long-continued and suppressed grief, she yet bore this trial with wonderful strength and firmness; but her weakness afterwards was such, that it seemed doubtful if she would ever recover;—and the danger was averted only by the delight which it gave her to perceive the new influences of paternal affection on Selding's mind.

That mutual tenderness which had been so long unknown betwixt them, was again renewed; the misunderstandings which had arisen, chiefly from want of due confidence and explanation, were gradually clearing away, without any regular effort for that purpose, when the cold-hearted, malevolent Benkwitz, came forward once more, like a demon, to destroy all the good that had been gained! Selding had no chance against this man's thorough self-possession, and depth of deceit; Benkwitz found means to revive all his former propensities to dissipation and licentious pleasures; he persuaded him, that Amelia's affection was but mere pretence, for the sake of acquiring a complete dominion over her husband; as to her extreme weakness, this also was a deception, in or-

der that his fears for her safety might induce him to withdraw from agreeable society. This abominable plan succeeded; for Selding, though he did not believe all, was persuaded that there was a great share of truth in what was alleged by his friend Benkwitz, for whom he still had a great respect. At every interview with his wife he became colder, at least more guarded in his expressions; at length he insisted that, as soon as her health was re-established, she should join with him in the wonted circles of society from which she had so long been absent. Amelia promised that she would do so for the future, only for the present excused herself on account of her weak health, which rendered it impossible for her to bear any fatigue; but Selding was inclined to look upon this as a mere pretext. Amelia felt exceedingly vexed at his mistrust, and expressed her vexation. Selding, who thought that her bitter expressions arose from a consciousness that his accusation had been well founded, now repeated the demands which he had before made. Amelia in the most determined tone absolutely refused them; this led to a violent altercation, and Selding parted from her as he had never done before,

with his heart full of anger and resentment. Benkwitz exerted himself night and day to keep the wounds open which he had thus inflicted; nay, he poured poison into them, so as to taint the whole existence of his victim. As to Amelia's sufferings, they were yet deeper and more dangerous, but she never complained; her grief wore on in silence and unmarked by any one.

Selding had now lost altogether that cheerful humour which had before been natural to him;—Benkwitz said that he felt it to be his duty if possible to rouse him from this mood; and he therefore took his friend with him to the gaming-table. As usual, on such occasions, Selding commenced by winning some trifling sums, but at last came off a loser to an amount that was indeed no trifle. This deprived him completely of whatever remains of self-possession and good spirits had been left to him. In the worst possible humour, with his brows lowering and contracted,—always silent and reserved, he seldom made his appearance at his own house, which, alas! no longer appeared to him an asylum where peace and happiness awaited him. Shame and self-reproach now fettered his tongue, and estranged him more than

ever from his wife. It was only with Benkwitz that he spoke freely, and this elegant sympathising friend never failed to provide him with balm for his sorrows, or at all events dissipation and distraction of thought at the banquet or card-table. So, for a few months, life was dragged toilsomely on, amid constant disputes, and under the heavy burden of concealed sorrow. Both parties were convinced that Providence never had intended them for each other—that they had married rashly and without due knowledge of their mutual dispositions; consequently, Benkwitz now found the long wished-for opportunity to wind up his schemes, —to give as it were the *coup de grace* to his unfortunate victims. When in company with Selding, he dropped divers hints how very possible it might be to break the bonds of a marriage in all respects so unsuitable. He added that an individual like Amelia, who had already withdrawn herself from the society of her husband, would probably not suffer by a result of this kind, but that such an arrangement would on the contrary be very agreeable to her own wishes. Selding's pride was roused; his heart was filled with the bitterest resentment, and Benkwitz accordingly led him on

to a mode of conduct, which, considering the previous state of Amelia's feelings, must of necessity give her far more provocation than before. Another violent dispute followed between the deluded husband and his unfortunate wife. The words "separation for ever" were pronounced—this fearful condition was fixed, and on both sides —unalterably.

Yet as the words passed from their lips, both involuntarily shuddered; but a false shame made them conceal what they suffered at that moment. The first decisive step was now taken, and other measures followed of course. Amelia's heart seemed now broken; she thought it was impossible to live; but summoned up all her pride and consciousness of rectitude to support her spirits. Finally, in a calm well-written letter, she only begged her husband's permission that she might retain her child, who, at that age, so much required a mother's tender care and protection. Selding was much agitated when he read this letter—his resolution began to waver; but Benkwitz was never long absent. He took care to repress every better impulse in his victim's mind, so that an answer was dispatched, in which there prevailed a style of

cold politeness, without even the slightest token of regret or affection. He agreed that Amelia should have the care of her child only on this condition—that it might be sent to his house once every day—and enclosed her a formal settlement of an ample provision for her expences. Her answer was written in a manner, if possible, still more cold and more polite. As to her yearly income, she fixed it to be only one-half the proposed sum; adding, that if she had any fortune, however limited, to maintain herself and her child, she would not, after the moment of leaving his house, have accepted the smallest aid, or have been in any degree troublesome to him.

The day was appointed on which this plan was to be carried into effect, and she awaited with the feelings of a condemned criminal the dreadful hour which was to separate her *for ever* from all that in this world she held dear. By a great effort of courage and resolution, her health was prevented from sinking in this struggle; but her deadly paleness, and changed features, must have betrayed to her infatuated husband the hazard she now run, had it not been determined on both sides that they were not to meet.

On the day when Amelia took her departure from his house, Selding intentionally staid out till a very late hour. On his entrance, the servant gave him a packet, of which he eagerly broke the seal,—it contained only the key of Amelia's writing desk. Midnight was now past; but he hastened into her room. The silence—the desolate appearance of this apartment, even as if this had been the funeral day of its former inmate—the scene, too, where he had so often been happy—had a powerful influence on his feelings. He tried the key which opened her writing-table, for he had flattered himself with faint hopes that he would here discover some farewell letter—some token that her affection for him was not altogether passed away. He found nothing more, however, than the keys belonging to the house, with a slip of written parchment, for a direction, tied to each—a catalogue of all the plate, linen, even wine and other stores, with her account-books, in which were regularly noted even the smallest sums that she had distributed. There was also a remnant of the money which he had given her for house-keeping. With a kind of horror, he surveyed all these; but, still hoping to find the wished-for letter, he

had recourse to a chest of drawers, in one of which he found almost all her jewels,—every present that he had made her in happier days; nothing but a single ring and a locket was wanting. Yet no! there should have been among the rest a miniature portrait of himself, richly set in gold, and surrounded with brilliants. He sought for this a long while in vain; at last, under a heap of other ornaments, (for his gifts of this kind to Amelia had been very numerous,) he found the gold frame and the brilliants; but the portrait was wanting! The tears started into his eyes—he was deeply affected—and in vain, through the remaining wearisome hours of the night, did he endeavour to rest.

On the following morning, Benkwitz came to breakfast with him; he remarked Selding's melancholy, and did not fail, with his usual cunning, to discover the cause. As on former occasions, too, he considered it his duty to rouse Selding from this mood; and, in the end, he took the latter away with him to the gaming-table. Indeed, the unhappy man went thither without reluctance, in hopes that, in the wild passions excited by high play, he might overcome the reproaches of his own conscience. For some time he again won small

sums. Benkwitz's instigation, and the varieties of the game continued to lead him on, till, as it might have been expected, fortune became adverse, and now he proceeded obstinately, as if to extort a compensation of his losses, which were soon formidable and heavy. Even already, his affairs and his credit with the public had suffered a severe shock. He was well aware of this; but, fearing to break the spell which, for the present, protected him from feelings still more painful, he willingly closed his eyes against all prudential considerations, and rushed deeper and deeper into the vortex of dissipation. To what other method could he have recourse, now when every moment spent in solitude was torture, and to look back on the past, or onwards to the future, was alike hopeless and intolerable. His child was sent daily to visit him, and the few minutes that such visits lasted, were the best that his life could now afford. Oftentimes, when caressing the poor infant, he wished fervently in his heart that it were possible for him to recal the pleasures of his former days. Yet, in spite of these conflicts, and notwithstanding the respect which he could not help feel-

ing for Amelia, he still thought himself fully assured that he could not any longer have been happy with her, and that their separation was both prudent and indispensable.

CHAPTER IV.

A WHOLE year had past over in this manner. Amelia lived quite secluded from the world in a retired part of the suburbs, where she rented a small house and garden. The care of her child, the culture of plants and flowers, reading, needle-work, and sometimes a visit from a neighbouring lady who had been her companion in early life, made out the humble round of her employments and diversions. The bitter pangs of separation, which for some days she thought it was impossible to outlive, gradually declined into a mood of calm melancholy. Only the sincerest and most disinterested affection for her lost deluded husband still survived, and shed its solitary light through the dense clouds of indifference and apathy by which her life was overshadowed. She reflected on her own conduct; she discovered clearly the errors of which she had been guilty;—with-

out forgetting her husband's faults, she perceived that he might have demanded of her much more concession and indulgence than she had shown. She repented her too great irritability; her want of prudence, and of due consideration for his wayward temper,—now looking on her melancholy lot as a just punishment, which she ought to bear with equanimity and resignation. Above all, she resolved that, if her child's life were spared, she would instruct him in such manner, that he might never inherit the faults which had made his parents so miserable.

There was, besides the little Gustavus, one bond of intercourse yet unbroken betwixt Amelia and her husband;—this was the attendance of their mutual physician and friend Zornau, a worthy benevolent man, who had tried every means in his power to prevent their separation, and saw, with real grief, that his endeavours were in vain. Till now, his visits to Selding had proceeded from motives of friendship only, not from the necessity of exercising his medical skill;—but that firm constitution, which had long resisted the effects of dissipation, and the wasting influence of ungovernable passions, began at length to totter,

and Zornau's counsel was very often required. When attacks of illness confined Selding to his own apartments, he felt, of course, in a double degree, the mournful solitude in which he now lived, and the cold selfishness of his worldly-minded friends, not one of whom, except Benkwitz, came to visit him. At last it happened, during a severe paroxysm, when both in mind and body he was completely exhausted, that his old book-keeper, almost by force, brought him to examine his accounts; and the result was, that his fortune, once so ample, had already been overdrawn and dispersed—in a word, that he must look on himself as a ruined man. Selding was exceedingly exasperated by this new discovery; however, he was so thoroughly convinced that his friends, as soon as they knew the state of his affairs, would assist him, that he had no doubt of avoiding, by this means, the bankruptcy to which he must otherwise be subjected. It was proved, in a short time, however, that, although he had acquaintances enough, and without number, there was not among them even a single friend;—they had all recourse, one after another, to the lamest subterfuges and evasions—at last

shunned meeting with him on any occasion; and Selding found himself obliged to submit to many painful sacrifices, in order to escape the utter ruin by which he was threatened. All this filled his already wounded heart with the most bitter contempt and hatred of the world; only his confidence in Benkwitz remained unabated, and, in the changeless friendship of this worthy companion, he trusted that he could find a sort of compensation for the disappointments that he had encountered.

In one of those houses, where Selding now often passed the whole night, where the most nefarious games of chance were played, and the doors kept locked against the police, there appeared occasionally a certain officer, who entered boldly into the amusements of the place, and preserved the most perfect *nonchalance*, whether the stake was high or low. Such conduct of course attracted attention from all present; his appearance and demeanour commanded respect; but to Benkwitz, who had generally the station of banker at the *Vingt-un* and Pharo tables, his presence seemed always particularly troublesome and unwelcome. The more that Benkwitz betrayed irritation at his interference, the more

watchful this stranger became of every proceeding; till, at last, in the middle of a very deep game, he seized the Prussian's hand, holding it with a grasp of iron, till he had forced him to disclose its contents, and prove to the whole party that he was a sharper and a scoundrel! Upon this discovery, there was an universal uproar. Benkwitz foamed with rage, and challenged the officer to mortal combat, while the latter adhered calmly and coldly to his assertions, appealing to the whole party for their confirmation. Selding was at the first moment quite confounded, not knowing what he ought to do; but afterwards concluding that he should support his friend in this extremity, and in hopes that the stranger might be under some mistake, he chose Benkwitz's side in the dispute,—which led to a general warfare. All those who had been losers in the game, joined with the strange officer; the gainers with Benkwitz; and the master of the house tried in vain to restore order among his unruly guests. At last, after a frightful scene of useless altercation, the stranger, who was the only individual, except Selding, who had maintained his own dignity, came close up to the Prussian, took

him by the arm, and whispered some words in his ear; whereupon our hero perceived that his friend grew pale, and even trembled like a leaf. Selding was himself no less agitated, when he saw the end of this rencontre; for Benkwitz in the next minute seemed ready to sink through the earth, he could not bear to meet the looks of any one, but all at once started up, seized his hat and stick, and rushed out through a crowd of people,—his only object now seeming to be that of making his own escape.

All were now silent and astonished, looking for explanation to the stranger, who said that he had, in former years, met with this man in various places,—at Aix la Chapelle,—at Wisbaden, —Embs, and Carlsruhe;—that he had made his *entrée* sometimes as an Englishman—sometimes as a French Count, or an Italian Marquis; but, in all these towns, had been found out and disgraced as a notorious swindler, who lived only by imposing on the credulous and unwary. "For the present," added he, "you may rely that he never more will venture among us,—and what I said to him to-night, is quite sufficient to drive him away from Vienna. I might have done more than

this—I could have effected his utter destruction, for he is completely under my power." The whole party had now crowded round the officer, anxious to hear more; only Selding stood aloof, and quite lost in his own reflections. Perceiving this, the stranger neglected the rest, and went up to him. "I am well aware," said he, "that the fate of this worthless man distresses you exceedingly, and I have for a long while observed with regret that intimacy with which you favour him. It is not the first time that this artful swindler has contrived to gain the confidence of a noble and unsuspecting mind. You may be assured that the respect due to your own undisguised and honourable conduct, ever since I had the pleasure of meeting you, was no slight inducement to take proper measures for unmasking this villain, who would, sooner or later, have effected your utter destruction. I rejoice more than I can express, that I have at last succeeded in my design, and that you will be more on your guard for the future—Farewell!" With these words, he shook hands cordially with Selding, who, in the conflict of his feelings, could not utter a word; the tears started into his eyes, and this was enough to prove to the

stranger, that the person in whose behalf he had interfered, was not ungrateful.

After this adventure, our hero's emotions were indeed much more violent and distracting than at any former period. He found himself at his own house, without knowing how he had come thither; and it was not till after a long interval, that he could arrange his thoughts, which, after all, brought him no comfort or composure of spirit. "Thus, then," he exclaimed, "the last bond which held me united with this world and its pleasures, is broken; I had wished well to all mankind, and have never willingly injured any mortal, yet here I am left as an alien and outcast, utterly alone." In his affection for Amelia, he had been disappointed; his hopes of domestic happiness were for ever gone; dissipation had lost every charm, and where he had at last trusted to find a warm-hearted disinterested friend, he had been the dupe of a selfish contemptible villain, who, under specious pretexts, only sought to rob an unsuspecting and generous victim of his property. The first consequence of this self-examination was, that he knelt down, and took a solemn oath never again to touch a card or dice-box;

after which duty, he felt somewhat like a return of that innate confidence and energy which had so long been unknown to him. This vow was most religiously remembered and adhered to. Immediately, and in the most determined manner, he broke off all intercourse with his late associates; refusing them admittance if they ventured to call at his house, for his heart now loathed the presence of almost every human being. With the same impetuosity with which he had thrown himself about a year ago into the vortex of dissipation, he now recommenced his occupations as a man of business;—he laboured unceasingly—his attention was on the stretch both night and day—and, within a time much shorter than he could have expected, he had contrived to replace almost all that he had lost by negligence, or at the gaming-table. The thought that he was thus labouring for the sake of his child, for whom he was bound to provide, made all his toils seem light, and he never lost sight of this one cherished object.

A state of long-continued and violent excitement, however, (which was so unwonted and unnatural for Selding, who had hitherto no pursuit but that of pleasure,) joined to the effect of weak-

ening excesses, and agitation already undergone, wore out his strength;—he was attacked by a very dangerous illness, so that, being unable to attend his business, he sank into a state of apathy and despondence, from which the good hearted physician Zornau could not help apprehending the worst consequences. He exerted his skill and ingenuity to the utmost, but exhausted nature seemed to mock at all his endeavours; he perceived also, that his friend's domestic circumstances, attended, as he now was, only by mercenary servants, added much to the difficulty. There was, throughout, in Selding's house, a defect of that watchful attention,—that unwearied care, which, indeed, an affectionate heart alone can bestow, and which wealth never can purchase. More than ever did Zornau now deplore that unhappy quarrel with Amelia,—and, at times, the thought of a reconciliation being yet possible, rose in his mind. He knew Selding's goodness of heart,—he was convinced of his wife's unabated love,—but the weak state of his patient did not permit him to venture on any measure which would lead to new mental excitement and agitation. However, he betook himself to Amelia

and explained to her how dangerous the disorder was, under which her husband now suffered. At this intelligence, she expressed the utmost grief and anxiety; she was agitated even more than he had expected,—at last burst into tears, threw herself at Zornau's feet, and besought him to save her beloved Augustus!—She requested also that she might be allowed to go to him immediately; but the physician described the hazard of such an interview,—which it was impossible for him, consistently with his professional duties, to allow; adding, that *hopes* no doubt remained, provided it were possible to obtain better attendance than that of the servants who were now in Selding's house. Amelia's excitement and watchful interest increased every moment; at last she started from the chair on which the physician had again placed her—"*Now* I understand you," cried she in a tone of rapture;—"my plan is formed and fixed, but it cannot be carried through without your assistance. I shall go to my husband, I alone shall be his nurse, nor shall any one else come near him, but he must never learn by whom he is thus attended."

Zornau had, in truth, not anticipated this, and

looked at her with astonishment. "You *must* go to him," she continued, "and say that you have come to recommend a new servant,—an old lady, the widow of an officer who has been reduced to narrow circumstances, and who can be relied on for care and skill in watching the sick. He must, no doubt, agree to any proposal of yours. I shall have recourse immediately to my friend in this neighbourhood, to whom little Gustavus is already accustomed, and under whose care the child will be perfectly safe during my absence. This friend, alone, besides yourself, must be made acquainted with our plan. I shall pretend an attack of sudden illness at her house, which will account for my not returning hither; I can disguise myself so completely, that no one will be able to recognize even a single feature, and, in the course of two hours, will be ready to accompany you, if you will bring a carriage to fetch me away. I shall go directly to my husband, and remain with him as long as there are any dangerous symptoms in his disorder, but it is to be understood, that before he is quite recovered, and before his recollection returns, I shall take my departure, so that he will have no suspicion

who the sick-nurse in reality was, who had so long watched, wept, and suffered beside him."

Zornau had some doubts as to the possibility of carrying this plan into effect; but she contrived to answer them all. During the rest of this day, she was employed in making the requisite arrangements for the care of her child, and it was not till the following morning that Zornau arrived with his carriage, in order to take her to the invalid's house. She had disguised herself in a very old fashioned dress, overloaded with flounces and furbelows; she wore high-heeled shoes, which made her seem much taller than her real stature; her beautiful features were coloured with a brown dye, and her luxuriant hair was concealed under a cap and grey frontlets, so that even the physician, who was aware of the deception, could not possibly have recognized her.

CHAPTER V.

MEANWHILE Selding had been prepared for the arrival of a new attendant, who was formally ushered into his room by the physician. The window-blinds were drawn down; the gloom at once increased her sadness, and aided the deception. Zornau had gone up softly to his patient's bed, and made a sign that Amelia should draw nearer, but, alas! what a scene here awaited her! After a separation of eighteen months, she beheld once more, by the dim light, her beloved Augustus, but the fixed hopeless expression of long suffering was imprinted on his countenance—he was deadly pale, and so weak, that he could scarcely thank the physician for his inquiries, or bring out a few words to welcome Amelia, whom, of course, he looked upon as a person wholly unknown. Under the dreadful agitation of that moment, she had almost been betrayed,—and it was

not without the utmost exertion of self-command, that she could avoid speaking to him in her own natural voice, instead of the cracked feeble tones of an old woman which she had assumed. It was only the recollection of his weakness, and the terror inspired by the physician's warnings on this head, that prevented her from the indulgence of her own feelings; but her forcible mind conquered this temptation; after a short interval, she began her duties with the utmost coolness, care, and circumspection.

From that hour, onwards, no stranger or menial durst ever approach Selding's couch. Day and night she kept her place there, with a patience and power of endurance that seemed almost supernatural;—she gave him every medicine, every refreshment; she watched the slightest movement or tone of his voice; and when she had passed many hours in this state of anxiety, if he chanced to fall asleep, it was her only indulgence, if she could kneel unobserved beside him, pray for him, moisten his burning hand with her tears, and tell him, in a low voice, though he were insensible of her presence, how much she had suffered for his sake during that long, long

separation, and how sincerely she yet loved him. Zornau was often obliged to interfere, beseeching her to have a due regard to her own health; but there was only one argument, that of rendering herself better able to fulfil her laborious duties, which induced her sometimes to retire for an interval of rest. Meanwhile, Selding's illness always increased, as it drew towards the decisive crisis. He was seldom in possession of his mental faculties, and in his delirium, betrayed amply to Amelia the real state of his wounded heart; she was convinced that, amid all the dissipation and delusions in which he had been plunged, he had never forgotten her. The fever under which he now suffered, seemed especially to disorder his brain and eye-sight, so that, even in his best intervals during the day, he could not clearly distinguish any object, and this circumstance rendered Amelia's task much less difficult than it would otherwise have been, as she scarcely required to disguise herself, though she persevered in speaking with a tone of voice which it was impossible for him to recognize. At length, her indefatigable endeavours were in so far successful, that there seemed to be a gleam of hope; his illness

had passed the crisis, and he might possibly recover. His lucid intervals were more frequent, and lasted longer;—he had also many hours of sound and deep sleep, from which he awoke refreshed and cheerful. Amelia watched, with indescribable rapture, these tokens of returning health; and would have been quite happy, had she not remembered that the hour of their inevitable separation approached so much the nearer.

Now there commenced a period, of which the influences were more affecting than any that she had in her whole life encountered. As the poor helpless invalid gradually regained his senses, his goodness of heart was again manifested, and all those dark shades in his character, which only passion had produced, were cleared away. Amelia became now the unknown and unsuspected witness of his real feelings, which were obvious in every word and action,—she saw the heroism with which he endured all the sufferings of his malady,—the kindness with which he treated the servants,—and the gratitude he cherished towards her and the physician Zornau. Selding's active mind soon began to require occupation; but as the weakness in his eyes obliged him to have the room always

darkened, it was not possible to afford him any other entertainment than that of mere conversation. Zornau supplied him regularly with all the public news of the day, and Madam Werner (as Amelia now called herself,) was obliged to tell him all the stories and anecdotes that she could possibly recollect; at last, even the history of her own life! She had long expected that the reviving invalid would make inquiries on that subject, and had prepared herself accordingly. In a low, yet shrill voice, avoiding, as usual, every tone which he could recollect, she spoke of her beloved husband, of whom she had been untimely deprived, and the many afflictions she had endured; then, without being in any degree suspected, she had an opportunity of describing her own feelings.—Oftentimes her story was interrupted by tears, and Selding listened to her with a degree of sympathy and deep interest, for which he himself was at a loss to account. Indeed, notwithstanding all the precaution that had been used, he found himself deeply affected by the tones of Madam Werner's voice—long lost feelings were again awoke —and his thoughts turned more and more frequently to his absent Amelia. The belief that he

had acted unjustly towards her, and that he had misunderstood her character, were ideas that, since the removal of the perfidious Benkwitz, often rose on his mind; but he repressed all such emotions, because he believed their reunion to be impossible, and never mentioned her name—not even to Zornau. Now, however, the long silence was broken, and frequently, in Amelia's presence, he spoke of her to the physician; at those hours, too, when his brain was still disordered, he confused the image of his wife strangely with that of Madam Werner. Often, when she smoothed his pillow, and kindly supported his aching head, he felt a degree of happiness and consolation, such as was to himself inexplicable. Oh, then! how did Amelia's heart beat, and what a struggle it cost her not to betray herself! In such manner a few days passed away, and Selding's health had so much improved, that she saw, with blended joy and regret, the time drawing near when she must again part from her beloved Augustus. An accidental circumstance, arising from her own want of caution, tended to hasten this event. One night, when she was watching him, as usual, quite alone, he had fallen into a slumber so deep, that she doubted

not it would continue for some hours; she, therefore, took this opportunity of throwing aside, for a short time, the troublesome disguise which she always wore. She carefully drew the curtains of his bed, retired to a distant corner of the room, in which stood the toilet-table, and placed her night-lamp, so that, even if he should awake, he could not see her. She then took off the cumbrous old-fashioned gown,—the masquerade cap and false grey hair,—washed the colour from her face, intending to renew it again before she had finished her toilet,—and so stood at the table, half-undressed, re-arranging her own luxuriant locks which hung in beautiful ringlets over her shoulders. At that moment Selding awoke. At first, the lamp light, which, though at a distance, burned brighter than usual, attracted his notice, but then there was a mirror on the wall opposite to his bed, of which Amelia had never thought, and therein he beheld the well-known form in all her loveliness. For some moments he supposed it was but an illusion, which would directly fade, but the form remained; it moved; he saw her twining her long hair round her fingers, and binding it over her forehead. He started up and exclaimed, "Amelia—my own

beloved angel Amelia! art thou here indeed?" At these words, she was almost petrified with terror, and felt at once the great imprudence of which she had been guilty, but, quickly recovering her self-possession, extinguished the light, threw a shawl round her shoulders, and replaced the false hair and cap. She then stepped cautiously across the room, and took her station, as usual, at his bed, to know what he wished for. He threw back the curtains, and by the moonlight beheld, as usual, the grotesque figure of his old nurse. "What delusion is this?" said he, "Where is she? Where is my dear, long-lost Amelia?" "Your Amelia," answered she, "how can I tell? Where would you have her to be?" "Here in this room! I have seen her;—she was here even now." "You have been dreaming, Herr von Selding." "No," cried he with great vehemence, "*that* was no dream; I was quite awake, and saw her as plainly and surely as I now behold you." "But *where*, or how?" "Yonder in the mirror;—if she were in the room, she must be still here; the door has not been opened." "Nay," answered Amelia, "I must beg you to compose yourself; for all this has been nothing more than

a dream. Yesterday, you conversed with the physician for a long while about your wife, and it was natural enough that you should think of her afterwards." So they disputed for some time, till at last Selding fell back exhausted on his pillow, seemingly unable to speak more; but after a short interval he roused himself and took her hand. "Well," said he, "if it were, as you say, but a dream, it was indeed a beautiful and blissful illusion—would that it had endured longer! Tell me truly, was it but a phantom that I then saw? Art thou my Amelia?" In her extreme agitation, she was now about to tell him all, but she knew that his last words were spoken under the influence of returning delirium, and remembered the physician's injunctions that he should by no means yet be exposed to any mental excitement. She drew her hand gently from his, pressed it on his burning forehead, and said, "Herr von Selding, you are still very weak and feverish; endeavour, I beseech you, to be quiet, and to forget your dream. To-morrow we shall speak of it farther with Dr Zornau." With these words, she left the bed, went to the table, and brought him a cooling draught, which he took from her in silence; but as she

looked at him while he was drinking, she saw that the tears flowed fast from his eyes. Then Amelia could no longer restrain hers;—she wept passionately. Selding heard her sob, and this proof of sympathy deeply affected him. "Good, kind-hearted Werner!" said he; "I give you a great deal of trouble—pray bear with me!" Unable to answer, she pressed his hand in the greatest emotion, and retired immediately, that she might not run the risk of being wholly discovered.

Under the greatest anxiety, she waited for the arrival of Zornau, in order to prepare him beforehand with an account of what had happened during the night. She was resolved that, under some well contrived pretext, she would now remove from the house, for she saw no possibility of remaining, under present circumstances, without bringing on, for certain, that *eclaircissement*, which, in Selding's weak state, might prove so dangerous. The physician came at his usual hour—he was exceedingly vexed at the adventure of the night—and still more distressed at the situation in which he found his patient, who, in his opinion, was now far worse than when he left

him on the preceding day. It was, indeed, in very confused language, and with wild looks, that Selding described the apparition by which he had been visited, and there seemed great risk that he might suffer a dangerous relapse. Yet the physician was under the necessity of acquainting him, that Madame Werner must return that day to her daughter's house, whose accouchement of her first child was about to take place, and who had earnestly besought her mother's attendance at that time of anxiety. Selding seemed greatly startled when he heard this intelligence, but he was at present so absent, and so much wrapt up in his own thoughts, that he felt the blow less than might have been expected. Madam Werner accordingly retired, and promised that, as soon as the circumstances of her own family permitted, she would return to visit the invalid.

Quite contrary to Zornau's anticipations, the supposed vision had the most favourable influence on his patient's mind; for he looked on it as an intimation that she had forgiven, and still loved him. His constitution, naturally good, and aided by the advantages of youth, soon triumphed over this last attack;—he was awoke, indeed, to

new life, by the delightful hopes of restoring that domestic happiness which had seemed lost to him for ever.

Amelia had now, for the second time, forsaken her husband's house; on this occasion, however, though she was not without fears for his life, yet she left it with feelings very different from those by which she had been before overwhelmed. She had now certain proofs that he loved her, and the rapturous belief that they might again be united, and that, after such severe trials, no second misunderstanding could arise betwixt them, outweighed all her present distresses. Selding, too, felt every day more and more, as if balm from Heaven had been poured into his wounded heart;—the gloomy night in which his spirit had so long been sunk was dispersed by returning gleams of rational consolation, and by his firm resolutions of amendment in his future life. Since he began thus to recover, he had frequently spoken with Zornau on Amelia's midnight apparition in his apartment, but, as the doctor would not allow this to have been any thing more than a dream, he was at last silent on the subject, but never gave up, in his own mind, the conclusions

he had drawn. He was convinced there had been some mystery, which his attendants were determined not to explain. All that he had observed lately of Madame Werner seemed to him very extraordinary; her demeanour, her person, her tone of voice, the emotion she had betrayed when she saw that he was in tears; these circumstances, added to the reflection in the mirror, excited suspicions which he could not indeed explain to himself, and durst not impart to another for fear of being only laughed at. In short, he had guessed the stratagem with which Amelia's affection had inspired her—was afraid, however, to think himself worthy of such good fortune; but these surmises contributed more to his convalescence, than all the most laboured arts of the physician.

The first day that he was pronounced out of danger, and allowed to rise from bed, he put into Zornau's hands a richly embroidered purse, containing one hundred ducats, and a simple ring, in which his own hair was inclosed, and these he requested the physician would immediately send to Madame Werner. Zornau seemed astonished at the value and elegance of these presents. "Nay, nay," said his patient with a significant smile, "if

Madame Werner, as you informed me, is in reality the poor widow, who, from her narrow circumstances, was thus obliged to enter into the service of a stranger, and bestow such laborious attention as I received from her,—in that case even, she must not look on this sum as payment of my debt, (for what sum could be a due recompense for such exertions?) but merely as a trifling token of my sincere and lasting gratitude. If, however, she is not what you have represented her, I should wish the money to be given to the poor, and that she should retain only the ring in remembrance of me." Zornau pretended not to comprehend the full meaning of this discourse, and Selding would not explain himself any farther. Henceforth the good-hearted physician thought his interference unnecessary, and left it to the natural current of their own affections to bring about that full reconciliation which he so ardently wished.

Still, for a considerable interval, there was somewhat of suspense and mystery that hung over the fates of the so fondly attached wife and husband;—there were even moments in which he yet asked himself, whether it was not possible

that he might have been deceived; and as for Amelia, she also would gladly have been more certain, whether the wish for a reunion was as ardent in his heart, as she felt it to be in her own. Meanwhile, Selding every day importuned his physician for permission to drive out. Zornau for a long time refused, but at length, when his acquiescence was rather extorted than freely given, his patient requested that the good doctor would immediately take the trouble of calling on Amelia, and that, in the gentlest and most delicate manner, he would entreat her to allow that a poor invalid, who had long been a prisoner, might have an interview with her, and so brighten, with the more than sunlight of joy, those first moments of his return to the walks of life. With the utmost alacrity, Zornau undertook this commission, his sole objection being, that the visit might better have been deferred a few days longer. On his arrival at Amelia's house, and delivery of his message, he was answered only with tears of joy and looks of delight, such as no words could have expressed;—but the mere possibility that, by coming abroad too soon, her husband's health might be injured, overcame every scruple that

might otherwise have remained on her mind, and she determined at once on the course that she would pursue. She sent the child immediately to his father's house, with a message that, on the following day, she would come herself, in order that the interview he wished for might take place, without infringing the physician's orders. For the first time, after many weeks, Selding had the happiness of caressing his child; and his anticipations of to-morrow were so vivid, that, through the night, he was quite unable to close his eyes.

The morning came. Amelia resolved to dress herself in her most becoming attire, such as she had worn in her happiest days; smiled indeed at her own vanity, but did not change her intention; then she tied Selding's ring with a silk ribbon round her neck, and, having thus completed her toilet, set out on her way with a beating heart. On her arrival at his house, no one knew her, for the servants that she had left there were all long since dismissed. When it was announced to Selding that a young lady was in the anti-room, who wished to see him, he guessed that it could be no other but Amelia, and hastened out

to meet her. Then they looked on each other; but the conflict of feelings, of joy, fear, doubt, and affection, held them both silent. He took her hand respectfully, almost as if they had been strangers to each other, and pressed it to his lips. She could not utter a word but grasped his hand in both hers, held it long, and looked steadfastly in his eyes, while her own were full of tears. At length, however, Selding, recovering his self-possession, thanked her for the condescending kindness of her visit, and led her into his own apartment. With surprise and delight she observed the change that had taken place here; the room was no longer fitted up as a study for himself alone, as it had been during her absence, and when she attended him in illness, but now appeared just as it had been when they lived together, two years ago. His bed now stood where hers used to be; her writing-table was set out with pens, ink, and paper, which he had used through that morning; every thing now appeared as in former prosperous days, and the sight of so many well-known objects, affected her beyond measure. "I have chosen this room for the present," said her husband, "because I find myself

here surrounded by so many delightful associations,—by such visions from the happy hours that are now long since past; and I can dream in my solitude, till as it seems all is restored to me; but, alas, the delusion is but for a moment!"

Amelia looked round her with a mournful expression, then fixed her eyes on the ground. "All that I see in this room," said she, "is so well-known, I cannot help feeling as in old times, as if I were indeed at home! Do you know," added she, "that I had come hither with the intention of spending this whole day with you?" She smiled on him with indescribable kindness, while his eyes gleamed in his exultation and delight. "Is it possible Amelia!" said he, "and when I had not even dared to beg your forgiveness? With your presence, this would indeed be a bright day for me!" "Nay, I am quite in earnest," she replied; "and I left orders with my servants, that our little Gustavus should be brought also." "*Our* Gustavus?" interposed Selding in an anxious tone, "there is yet that one link unbroken betwixt us;—he is *our* child!" Amelia became quite alarmed; she had deter-

mined to avoid, as long as possible, any expressions that might agitate and affect him. "Come now," said she at last, "we must give over this, you are tired and must take your place again here on the sofa by the writing-table." She would have led him thither, but ere she was aware, he had clasped her in his arms; and of a scene like this it is better not to attempt description. After their first raptures of forgiveness and mutual reconciliation were past, Selding spoke to her as follows:—"Amelia, I have one question to ask, which to me seems of great consequence, and I beseech you to answer sincerely. You will pity me if I have been under a mistake, but do not, I conjure you, mock at my credulity." Amelia's heart beat violently, and he proceeded. "I should have spoken to you before now, of a certain Madame Werner, who came hither when my severe illness was at the worst, and when my servants would have allowed me to die for want of proper assistance. This lady (at the risk, I may truly say, of her own life,) attended me with the utmost care and fidelity. Somewhat of a mysterious and inexplicable resemblance in her figure and demeanour,—sometimes

too, a momentary tone of voice awoke in my mind suspicions, hopes, and apprehensions, which I dared not mention to any one, and yet, Oh Amelia! was all which then occurred but a mere delusion of my own disordered brain?" He started up, and walked hastily to and fro, then took his place again beside her, and resumed his discourse more tranquilly. "Forgive me that I am thus moved; I shall endeavour to tell my story with rational composure. One night, when I had fallen into a profound sleep, I was suddenly awoke by a light in my room, which seemed to come from the mirror that hangs opposite to my bed, and therein I beheld your figure Amelia, —so precisely like,—the resemblance was so accurate, that I called your name aloud,—I wished to start up and embrace you! But all at once the light faded away,—the form had vanished,—I found myself alone in my dark room. Madame Werner came to me; but she, too, was so confused, so trembling, and agitated,——" "That you found out your own loving wife," cried Amelia, and threw herself weeping on Selding's breast.—"Yes, my dear Augustus,—it was I myself, who would not, for all the world,

have left you, nor entrusted any stranger with the care which you required in your illness. Your own heart then discovered my stratagem; but that night cost me many tears of regret and self-reproach. Here, my beloved, is the ring which you afterwards sent to me." She paused, and drew the ring from her bosom, but he did not make any answer; she looked at him, and was terrified, for he lay with his eyes closed as if fainting. Joy, indeed, is overpowering, as well as sorrow; but her tears and caresses soon revived him, and the bond of affection was once more united betwixt them, never again to be broken. Still they remained insensible to all that passed around them. Zornau knocked at the door, but was unheard; he came in without farther ceremony, and stood for some time contemplating the scene. At length Selding observed him. "Welcome, good Zornau," cried he; "you are come opportunely to witness the happiest moments of that existence which you contributed your best efforts to preserve. I possess again my dearly beloved Amelia! I was not so blind nor confused in illness as you thought. I guessed the truth, and your persuasions to the

contrary were of no avail. *She* it was, my faithful noble-minded wife, who, in spite of all my errors, and all the injuries I had inflicted, then watched over and supported me in the hours of pain and despondency.

THE SIEGE OF ANTWERP.

THE SIEGE OF ANTWERP.

CHAPTER I.

It happened at Antwerp, in the year 15—, one louring stormy evening, that Cassilda Nunez was seated in her own solitary chamber. Lost in melancholy reflections, she gazed from the window on the broad troubled waters of the Scheldt,—when the door was opened cautiously; a man, dressed like an ordinary peasant, stepped in, looked round him, as if fearful of being observed, presented to her a sealed letter, and, having thus fulfilled his commission, glided away without speaking a word. Cassilda trembled as she read the superscription. She had just broken the seal, when, with a dark frown over his features, her

husband, Frederico Gianibelli, made his appearance. She came forward to meet him, and gave him the billet in silence. "From your father, perhaps?" said he in a low growling tone—then read aloud what here follows:—

"Wretched girl,—thou art a runaway, not only from thy father, but from thine own happiness. His malediction followed thee across the seas, when at the heretic queen's gates, thou wert forced to seek for protection. His malediction follows thee here, while thy sinful heart still clings to the traitor, who, faithless to his religion and his country, supports the cause of heretic rebels. Leave him then, ere it is yet too late. On the Fort of Santa Maria waves thy father's banner, entrusted to him by that generous prince, whose heart still beats affectionately towards the fugitive, who so little deserves his love. Forgiveness yet awaits thee, if thou wilt return to us.

"FERNANDO NUNEZ."

Frederico folded up the letter, frowning as before,—then, with a steadfast look at Cassilda, inquired—"Whence have you received this treacherous communication?" She described calmly the mysterious manner in which it had been

brought to her, and he left the room without interchanging another word.

Cassilda Nunez was the daughter of a Spaniard, without patrimony, who had, from early youth, been a soldier, acquiring little by his profession; at length he had come with her to Madrid, in order to obtain a situation under Alexander Duke of Parma, who had been appointed to command the Spanish army in the Netherlands. Accidentally the Duke, who was then at the capital, saw the beautiful Cassilda Nunez in the Prado. By no means indifferent to female charms, but still more susceptible of impressions from that powerful and lively intellect which he could read in every glance of her dark eloquent eyes, the young hero admired her more than any girl he had yet beheld, and, before he was aware, had fallen deeply in love. The heart of a Farnese never, indeed, takes up any impression lightly; or, if his attachment at the beginning was of an ordinary and commonplace description, such feelings were changed into the most respectful and serious passion, when he was forced to acknowledge the dignity with which the poor girl repulsed his addresses, and became aware that the *Prince*, with all his wealth

and splendour, could never obtain from her that return of affection which might have been won by the *untitled* hero. But his love seemed to grow more ardent in proportion to the difficulties thrown in his way. Her father, meanwhile, who expected that, on this state of affairs, he might build up his own fortune, of course connived at, and even sanctioned the Prince's addresses, who used to come every day to the soldier's humble quarters, always preserving, however, the most respectful and modest demeanour in his attention to Cassilda. These visits were made with great caution, but though they were concealed from almost all his friends, the spies of King Philip were on the watch, and did not fail to represent at court how much of the Duke's time was wasted in the house of Fernando Nunez. The cold-hearted monarch subjected him to a serious lecture on his imprudence, which, however, had no other effect than that of rendering the young Prince more careful, and his visits less frequent than formerly.

Among the Duke's private acquaintances and friends was numbered a young Italian, named Frederico Gianibelli,—a man of extraordinary ta-

lents, who, notwithstanding his youth, had distinguished himself highly by his services as an officer in Flanders, and had, therefore, won the utmost confidence and favour from the commander-in-chief. All that was grand and gigantic in effect,—plans that to meaner souls would have been overpowering,—had for him especial charms. As to dangers, instead of being deterred by them, they seemed, in his estimation, to render the duties intrusted to him more desirable and attractive. Similarity of character, and many times an exact coincidence in their military schemes, had brought him by degrees more and more into the Duke's society, and at length, he had been appointed to go with his Highness as aid-de-camp to the intended blockade of Antwerp.

From this confidential friend the Duke could not long hide his attachment to the beautiful Cassilda. Frederico, too, had beheld her—he had admired beyond measure the fixed resolution and dignity with which she repulsed the advances of a lover, whose rank was so unsuitable to her own; but ere long, he had the unexpected pleasure of discovering, that Cassilda had looked on himself with approving glances, and that she would wil-

lingly receive from him those honourable addresses which it was impossible for the high-born Prince to offer. One evening, before this discovery had been fully made, Frederico happened to pay a visit at her father's house, who was absent; but he had found Cassilda at home in her own apartment, where they were engaged in friendly discourse, when Prince Alexander, without having knocked at the door, suddenly made his appearance. Frederico rose and advanced to meet him with rather an embarrassed countenance; while Cassilda, who had not expected this visit, hastily quitted her chair, and, not reflecting on the conclusions that might be drawn from her conduct, glided away into another room. The Duke's eyes glared with indignation. "The flower, however humble," said he, "that Alexander of Parma thinks proper to cherish, stands rather too high for a hand like thine to pluck. Thou mayest retire."

Frederico went without making any answer; but these words had excited him to a degree of rage, which only the most ample vengeance could allay. From that moment onwards, he was sensible how deep was the attachment that subsisted

betwixt himself and Cassilda, for wounded pride had awoke all the slumbering emotions of his heart. As to the Duke's proud warnings and menaces, he looked on them with contempt, and adopted the bold resolution of entering the lists openly as the Prince's rival. His love, now blended with ambition, became more than ever ardent, so that he could brave all dangers. In the bloom of youth and manly beauty, endowed too with almost unequalled talents, and a glowing romantic imagination, he offered his hand in marriage to Cassilda;—he offered her the truest, most energetic devotion of a heart that, till now, had never really loved.

Frederico was indeed the only man in whose presence Cassilda could not remain perfectly unconcerned and indifferent; and, of course, it was impossible that this state of affairs could long escape the watchful eyes of her father, who perceived that he now ran the utmost risk of seeing all his favourite hopes and deep-laid schemes defeated. The Duke also discovered the truth, notwithstanding the trouble which the lovers had taken to conceal it. Frederico was but too well acquainted with the unyielding obstinacy of the

Prince's temper; he knew that, by trusting to time and chance, all would, of necessity, be lost, and that it was only by an immediate flight that he could secure the fulfilment of his own purposes. Tormented by her father's base and mercenary plots;—intimidated also by the Duke's violence, and the powerful influence attached to his station, which might be exerted in many ways for her ruin, Cassilda, after a feeble resistance, submitted to Frederico's proposals. She fled with him towards the sea coast; they arrived safely at St Ander, where they found a ship that brought them over with a favourable wind to England.

The regard which Frederico had once felt towards the Duke of Parma; the admiration which he had cherished for his character and talents, were now changed into the most deadly hatred; and, as formerly, he had been spurred on by his ambition to join with the Duke, for the intended attack and plunder of Antwerp, *now* his feelings of revenge determined him to follow a very different course; he resolved still to go into Flanders, and to devote his utmost energies in defence of those protestant districts which the Spaniards had destined to be plundered and enslaved.

By Queen Elizabeth he was welcomed as an accomplished, able soldier. She supplied him with money, and gave him a letter of recommendation to the Prince of Orange, who received Frederico, not as a stranger, but as a young officer with whose character and brave conduct, in the Spanish service, he was already well acquainted. Here our hero was introduced also to the brave Marinix von St Aldegonde, burgomeister of Antwerp, in whose society, and accompanied still by his wife, who loved him almost to adoration, he hastened to embark for the Netherlands, determined either to conquer the proud Alexander in war, as he had before done in love, or, if this object were not gained, to die in the ruins of the city which he had sworn to defend.

With a heart full of ardent courage and delightful anticipations, he entered the town, along with his new friend the burgomeister. Looking forward to the powerful assistance which the Prince of Orange had promised him; trusting also to the Zealand fleet, with which the river Scheldt seemed to offer him a secure channel of communication; but, above all, relying on the resources of his own undaunted and creative genius,

he did not, for a moment, allow himself to doubt, that his endeavours would ultimately be triumphant. Yet, on the very same day, when Liefenhoek, a fort of considerable importance on the island of Doel, was captured by the Spaniards, and the free navigation of the Scheldt was lost, the brave noble-hearted Prince William of Orange fell by the treacherous attacks of assassins, and with him seemed to perish, at the same moment, all the fairest hopes of those who fought in the cause of liberty. Frederico Gianibelli now felt also, that adversity had begun her attacks on him, and had already clouded the brilliant prospects that were so fondly drawn; but, above all, he was discontented with the conduct of the Antwerp citizens, who, like true merchants, judged of every scheme on their own narrow-minded principles of caution and economy;—they were, therefore, never prepared to meet the sacrifices which he demanded of them, and treated his lofty plans for their defence as mere chimeras.

Meanwhile, Prince Alexander, who had been duly informed of Gianibelli's proceedings, and that Cassilda had accompanied him to Antwerp, felt a new stimulus towards the fulfilment of that

grand exploit, which he had long before at heart. Accordingly, he exerted his utmost ingenuity in devising measures for the overthrow of this important bulwark of Flanders and of Brabant. In his mode of procedure, finding himself opposed by his best and oldest generals, he raised himself, with resistless energy, above all hindrance and prudent counsel;—he saw, as well as they did, the dangers that were before him—but, at once excited by love, ambition, and revenge, he prepared himself, with gigantic energy, for the decisive encounter. Having observed, that, notwithstanding the capture of Liefenhoek, the fort of Lillo on the Brabant coast, which was held by the brave General Teligny, would still render it impossible for him to have that effectual command, which he had expected, over the Scheldt, he determined, at all risks, to throw a bridge across the river. Betwixt Kallas and Ordon, where the stream forms a curve, he erected two forts, named Santa Maria and Santo Philippo, one on each shore, in order to protect his engineers in constructing the bridge. The largest ships were deprived of their masts, which he shod with iron, and fixed in the ground as piles, notwith-

standing the depth of the water. The bridge was made of the dismantled ships and their boats, the whole being held together so firmly by cables, that it resisted all the violence of the waves and masses of floating ice which were now in the river; but, in order to supply himself with more vessels, he opened dams and sluices, so that the country was flooded, and brought over those which were thrown into his power by the fall and plunder of Ghent.

While these hostile operations were carried on within sight of Antwerp, Frederico, for his part, rested neither night nor day. The ramparts were strengthened and extended, so that danger and alarm might, as long as possible, be warded off from the quiet dwellings of the citizens; but it was not by means of such ordinary methods as every brave soldier would have employed, that Antwerp could now possibly be saved. The passage of the Scheldt must again be opened; the bridge must be destroyed; and although our hero's contrivances for this purpose could not fairly be judged of except by a mind resembling his own, and, therefore, were ill adapted to the comprehension of Antwerpian merchants; yet,

St Aldegonde's acute intellect, and his influence in the town, proved then of such importance, that means, to a certain extent at least, were supplied for the fulfilment of Frederico's plans. He had, at his own disposal, two ships, each of one hundred tons burden, and a number of flat-bottomed boats, which he directly began to convert for his own purposes into engines of destruction.

Just at this eventful epoch, when news arrived that the formidable bridge had been completed, and public apprehensions were stretched to the utmost, Cassilda received that letter from her father, who was now employed as commander at the fort of *Santa Maria*. Frederico Gianibelli, since his abode in Antwerp, was, alas! no longer distinguished by that bold, jocund and buoyant spirit, which he had evinced when in Spain and in England. The failure of many plans that he had formed, and which had been crushed at the outset by the paltry cautions and timidity of the vulgar spirits by whom he was surrounded, had rendered him gloomy,—even capricious in temper,—and his affection for Cassilda had lost that enthusiastic and heart-felt ardour, by which she

had at first been won. Ambition, blended with the spirit of revenge, may give new energy to a lover's addresses, but proves, alas! the worst enemy of domestic happiness and peace. The myrtle wreath which she had bestowed on him, when in her heart he became a successful rival of the Duke, withered now, and was only succeeded in his imagination by the laurel crown of victory, which he thought to gain in the battle field. His military stratagems, by which he was unceasingly occupied,—his restless activity and passionate devotion to one object,—were such, that he returned oftentimes his beloved Cassilda's endearments with coldness, almost with disdain. Ambition, alone, was the fuel by which his fiery spirit was now attracted, and Cassilda was acutely sensible of this alteration. She was too proud to reproach her husband; neglected love had changed in her heart to silent uncomplaining grief; and it was only to one confidante, Catharina van der Weert, the betrothed bride of Teligny, that she could not help involuntarily betraying the real cause of her sadness.

On the arrival of that letter from Cassilda's father, brought by a disguised messenger, who was

sought for every where in vain, doubts arose for the first time in Frederico's mind of his wife's affection, even of her fidelity. For the first time, too, his wayward and now morbid imagination led him into a comparison of himself, the dependent and humble soldier, having no other fortune but his own talents and courage, with the powerful high-born hero, who succeeded in every undertaking, because he possessed all outward advantages. The latter needed only to conceive a stratagem, in order to find means for its being carried into effect; the former was under the necessity of begging his way, and of submitting to the jurisdiction of mercenary citizens, who ruled over him, because, forsooth, they were styled burgomeisters and senators. Now, he saw too clearly the wide distance at which fate had placed him beneath the station of his princely opponent. Nay, more, Cassilda's grief and silent abstraction appeared only proofs of that longing which had probably taken possession of her heart, to be once more among the fortunate Spaniards. Perhaps her imperial lover, since his recent successes, appeared to her in a light far more interesting and attractive than before; especially now, when

even the strong walls of Antwerp seemed to afford no defence against him,—when he forced the broad stormy waters of the Scheldt to obey his control—and yielded only to Cassilda's charms, offering himself as a willing captive in her chains.

"*He* then, or *I*!" So Frederico exclaimed in a terrific tone, as he returned home after some hours spent in vain inquiries after the stranger who brought the letter,—and with these words unconsciously grasping the hilt of a dagger, which he now always wore. He found his wife sitting mournful and downcast, at a window which looked across to the shores of Brabant, and the fort of Santa Maria. Catharina van der Weert was with her. He went up gloomily to Cassilda, fixed on her a penetrating though not unkind gaze, and said, after a long inward conflict, "Wouldst thou go from hence to thy father? Is this, perhaps, the secret wish that now weighs on thy heart? Speak, then, at once the truth! Frederico Gianibelli has courage for all that can befall him—he can bear even that from which the spirits of other men would shrink, and bid defiance to fate, however horrible its threatenings! Only *this* he cannot

endure, to be the victim of cowardly chicane and artifice! By the Holy Virgin, who lends her name to yonder fortress, I swear, if it be thy wish to take refuge in the camp of the enemy, I shall allow thee to go hence in safety, and without one reproachful word!" Cassilda had risen from her place at the window—"Frederico," said she, with dignity, "I, too, had learned to bear that from which the spirits of other women would shrink. I left my father and my native land for love,—for the sake of an attachment which I could not so easily renounce and sacrifice as thou hast done,—nor shall I renounce it but with life!" "Well, then, my noble-hearted wife," exclaimed Frederico, embracing her with ardour, "be this our watchword,—'Love even unto death—Fidelity for ever!'" Cassilda gave him her hand in silence; with her eyes uplifted to Heaven, she vowed more intelligibly than words could have expressed,—"Love even unto death —Fidelity for ever!" "So, *now*," answered Frederico, "I shall return to my task, and fulfil it joyfully. I know that the proud invader, whatever may be his fortune in war, will never obtain *thee*, even though he rode triumphantly

over Gianibelli's mangled corse, into the ruins of Antwerp." With these words, he imprinted one fervent kiss on Cassilda's lips, and vanished.

The two friends (for Catharina had been present through the whole scene) looked silently at each other, then embraced, both weeping passionately. "Poor unhappy Cassilda!" said her confidante, "here thou art fettered by the resistless bands of love, and yet in yonder fortress filial duty claims also thy presence."—"If love indeed," said Cassilda, "if *requited* love here detains me in silken chains, then, my good Catharina, I shall never complain nor murmur. On Frederico alone I have relied; to him alone my whole affections are given. When I left my father's house I vowed that I should conquer with him or die, and never shall repent my engagement; but to you, indeed, my fortunate friend, how different is the lot assigned—a marriage to be celebrated with your father's blessing!—Your Teligny, amiable and mild-tempered as he seems, who, in your presence, only thinks of love, while he is at other times so fierce and resolute against the enemy, must insure your domestic happiness; but Frederico's passions, unequal and

outrageous as the lava streams of a volcano, force me into their own vortex, and bear my spirit irresistibly into his own sphere of conflict. But, Catharina," added she in a tone of ardour and enthusiasm, " this even—the wild energy which flashes in every glance of his dark eyes, and vibrates in every nerve—this exalted courage which raises him above difficulties that others would deem insurmountable;—his obstinate perseverance, that admits of no middle course between the highest good fortune or annihilation—these are the endowments which attracted my affections to Frederico—by these I am still, and shall ever be fettered. Willingly would I encounter my death-blow for his sake, or given by his hand."—" Nay, nay, Cassilda," said Catharina, " with a lover such as you have now described, I indeed could never be happy. My affections, however warm and constant, must always be placid and calm; nor could I ever, for the sake of any lover, renounce the duty that I owe to a parent who protected me during the helpless years of infancy, and without whose care I should never have lived to enjoy the fortunes that may be in store for me. It is true that I love Teligny most sincere-

ly, and for his sake would willingly forfeit my own life—but my father—or even the respect and obedience that I owe to such a parent—never! This I should feel to be impossible!"

At that moment, Teligny himself rushed into their apartment. He ran up to Catharina, and clasped her in his arms with great emotion,—"Poor unhappy girl," cried he, "what will become of you?" Frederico had followed him, and now said, in his usual stern and grave voice, "Mademoiselle, your presence will at this time be more requisite in your own house than in mine. Teligny will conduct you safely thither." Catharina, accordingly, went with her lover, trembling in every limb, and Cassilda ventured to ask her husband, what had caused this unusual agitation? The truth (of which Frederico now briefly informed her,) was, that the messenger who brought the Spanish letter had been at last discovered, and taken prisoner. On his person were found many letters of the Duke of Parma, proving amply that the Prince carried on a secret intercourse with several eminent citizens of Antwerp. Selfish wretches, who preferred their own private interest to the weal

of their native country, were indeed numerous, and among them fell to be included men in whom much confidence had been reposed; for example, Catharina's father, Adrian van der Weert, a privy-counsellor. His hatred of St Aldegonde, and firm adherence to the religious creed of his ancestors, had rendered him a traitor to the state. The Duke's letter addressed to this dignitary, only roused suspicion, but when his house was searched, other documents found there afforded certain conclusions as to his guilt. Consequently he was arrested; nor could the entreaties of the brave Teligny and Frederico, nor St Aldegonde's advice, that he should only be doomed to perpetual imprisonment, satisfy the furious resentment of the people. In a few days his head fell by the hand of the executioner.

The same secret messenger had also confessed on his trial, that he had brought a letter to the wife of Gianibelli; but the latter explained that incident to the senators,—produced the letter, which, as they perceived, was from a father to his daughter, without any political tendency whatever. He appealed also to St Aldegonde, who proved, that the only use made by Frederico of

the letter, was to acquaint his friend immediately that a spy was in the town; upon which they had joined in making a search, which at last proved successful. However, the mere necessity that he had been brought under, of urging this representation in his own defence, made a deep and painful impression on our hero. That he, whose ardent mind so eagerly seized on every possible means of injuring and opposing the Duke of Parma, should be suspected of an intention to join with him, or of having willingly received secret dispatches, was an idea almost insupportable, and the longer that he reflected on the confidence that subsisted betwixt Cassilda and Catharina van der Weert, the deeper did the most tormenting doubts take root in his mind. Even Teligny, whom he had always before treated as a trust-worthy and valued friend, was now received by him with marked coldness and indifference.

But, alas! Teligny had himself become changed in character, for the house of Catharina's father, in which he had so often been happy, was now become the abode of grief and despair. The ghost of its late miserable owner seemed to glide threatening through its desolate halls. "And

can you still wield your sword," said Catharina, "in the cause of those remorseless murderers who brought my father to the scaffold?" Her filial sorrow had indeed overpowered all other emotions; she remained shut up in her chamber, and would not look upon the sunlight. At last she would only write to Teligny. "When my father's ghost," said she, "that now summons his friends to avenge him, has been appeased and satisfied, then, perchance, but not till then, we shall meet again. But within these gloomy walls of Antwerp, you shall never behold me more." Teligny ran from place to place in the frenzy of despair,—and to him, therefore, a new proposal, at that time made by the senate, was exceedingly opportune and welcome. They suggested that a man of talents and consequence should endeavour to make his way across to Zealand, and hasten the preparations for sending out the auxiliary fleet, which had been too long delayed. He offered his services for carrying this plan into execution; was approved of by the magistracy, and set out from Antwerp, without having been allowed even to take leave of Catharina. She adhered firmly to her determination, that here in

Antwerp they should never meet again. Thus, the bravest officer, (Gianibelli excepted,) he who had been long the principal support of the Antwerp commonweal, and who had been ever foremost in the ranks of danger, took his departure. St Aldegonde, with a sad heart, gave him the requisite convoy, but, when he bade his friend farewell, it was impossible for him to repress his apprehensions of evil fortune. These were but too well-founded. Teligny was betrayed,—fell into the hands of the Spaniards,—and his native country had to deplore the absence (perhaps for ever) of her noblest champion.

Brussels also was now taken by the Spaniards, and thus all intercourse over land, by which subsidiary forces could have been hoped for, was cut off; the bridge across the Scheldt was completely finished, and public danger had come to its utmost height. However, this very danger, which had been rolling nearer and nearer like a dark thunder-cloud, seemed at length to rouse in the besieged, and people of the united provinces, courage, such as they had never shown before. Count Justia von Nassau, too, advanced with the Zealand fleet; he bombarded Liefenhoek,

took possession of the fort and Island, and there remained no obstacle to prevent his advancing up the Scheldt towards the bridge.

In Antwerp, meanwhile, Gianibelli became, if possible, more restless and active than ever. Since he had discovered, by the letter of Fernando Nunez, that the Duke still cherished hopes of getting Cassilda into his power, and tearing her from her husband's arms, this afforded a new spur to his exertions, and, without a moment's intermission, he racked his invention for new modes of defence. The two ships which had been voted to him by the senate, were by no means so large as he could have wished;—however, he had named one of them *Hope*, the other *Fortune*, and transformed them into diabolical engines,—floating mines,—which he trusted would bring destruction on his enemies. Having cut away the inside partitions, he filled the entire hold with gunpowder, hand-grenades, chain and grape-shot,—with all other murderous missiles that could be devised; finally covered the deck with grave-stones, with which he chose to supply himself from a church-yard. At last, the day had arrived, on the evening of which his grand exploit

was to be performed. The utmost caution had been used to keep the preparation of these ships a profound secret, and with proud confidence of success, Gianbelli now welcomed the hour of twilight. "Yonder," cried he to Cassilda, drawing her to a window, and placing a telescope in her hand. "Yonder, where you see a very dark spot, is the bastion of Santa Maria. Look under it on the right, and you can discern a black stripe across the water—that is the bridge. There, before morning, the watchword shall be 'liberty or death.' The Santa Maria will this night make her ascension, and——." "Hush—hush," said Cassilda, shuddering at these irreverent words, which Frederico pronounced unconsciously in the fervour of his own anticipations;—but, at that moment, the door opened; and, dressed in very deep mourning, with a long black veil, Catharina made her appearance. It was the first time since her father's death, and the unfortunate embassy of Teligny, that she had visited her friend, who received her with every token of kindness and affection. Gianibelli, however, to whom she made a deep obeisance, looked on her with cold dignity. "Since we met last," said

she, " it has been the will of Heaven, that the darkest clouds of misfortune should gather around me. The lightning, too, has struck ; I am bereft of all that I held dear in this world, and stand forsaken amid the ruins of my once prosperous fortune. For the first time to-day, after long solitude, I have ventured forth, only that I may throw myself before the altar of the high church, and implore from our omnipotent father, patience and courage to support those inevitable trials. Will you, my only friend, spare a little time to go with me ? without your support, I feel that I am unable to fulfil even this duty." Gianibelli's dark brows contracted ; the proud hopes that before beamed in his eyes, were changed to wrath and resentment. " You are offended, Signor," said Catharina, turning to him—but in this you do me injustice,—I shall remember you in my prayers,—I shall implore a blessing on your head, for, when my father was deserted by all the rest of the world, you and St Aldegonde had compassion for his distresses. Be not angry with the poor forsaken orphan. Come, my dear Cassilda, God may yet hear our humble supplications."

"Go, then, in God's name;" said Gianibelli, moved by her last words,—"pray that my designs may not be defeated, for on them depends the fate of your country, and of all its faithful adherents." Cassilda and her friend accordingly walked out together to the only church where Catholic worship was still permitted; they were kneeling at the altar of the Blest Virgin, when a stranger, who had seemed before to watch them on the streets, glided up to Cassilda, slipped a letter into the wide sleeve of her Spanish dress, and immediately vanished. Her devotion was disturbed; her thoughts were distracted; for she apprehended immediately that the letter came from her father. When vespers were ended, she accompanied Catharina as fast as possible to the house of the latter; here she broke the seal, and read what follows:

"Once more, Cassilda, I wish to prove that I can feel for you as a father; once more I must try whether I cannot persuade you to remember your duty, and return to the bosom of the true and only church—for, surrounded as you now are by heretics, there is no doubt that you will ere long become their prey. Oh! come to us again!—

you shall be received with kindness; the past shall be forgotten; riches, happiness, and honour, await you. At this moment you could appear as a ruler—as an empress,—in *his* presence, before whom you will ere long tremble in captivity, for, after a few days or weeks, Antwerp will be laid in ruins. Choose, then, your lot. Will you remain with a father's malediction, in the arms of a despairing traitor, or come hither to receive his blessing, under the protection of a conquering and noble-minded hero? Place your answer behind the statue of the Apostle Peter, at the entrance of the High Church. FERNANDO NUNEZ."

"Love even unto death—Fidelity for ever!" exclaimed Cassilda, and with these words she tore the paper, and threw it from her with vehemence. "Nay," said Catharina, "this Love which you encourage, and which is followed by a father's curse, will one day change into a demon, and aim a dagger at my friend's heart. Only Heaven forbid, that Fernando Nunez should fall a victim at the gates of Antwerp, while his daughter here triumphs within the walls! Truly, a father's blessing has no power to raise me above the horrors of my own fate—but his malediction must

have brought everlasting misery on my head!" "Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed Cassilda, inexpressibly struck by these last words. She seemed as if suddenly awoke from a dream, snatched up a pen, and on a fragment of paper, that lay on Catharina's table, traced these lines:

"Beware this night of the bridge, and of the fort named Santa Maria. Keep at a distance from both, if your life is as dear to you as it must be to your daughter, CASSILDA."

"May Heaven bless you, if you have written like an affectionate daughter!" said Catharina, as her friend hastened away. The latter went back trembling and anxiously to the church, where, according to the directions given, she concealed her answer behind the statue of St Peter. While she was yet a few steps advanced on her retreat, she observed the same man by whom she had been followed into the church; she saw him take the letter, and then hasten away as if his life depended on his expedition. "Thus I have made one sacrifice at the shrine of filial affection," said she to herself on the road home,—"God grant that I may not have sinned against other duties that are yet dearer to my heart!"

CHAPTER II.

EVENING now closed in. All Antwerp was in commotion; suspense and anxiety were painted on every countenance; only Cassilda stood as usual, thoughtful and gloomy, at her window, looking out upon the desolate darkness of the night. Suddenly she saw a gleam of light that danced along the surface of the river; then other fires were kindled, and moved onward in regular order. The lights resembled pillars of fire, reflected on the water, and the radiance was mirrored a thousand-fold in the weltering waves. This effulgence became always brighter and fiercer, till the whole appeared like a sea of flames; and Cassilda scarcely doubted that the fort had already been blown up. Her imagination presented to her her father's mangled frame, with his grey hairs and angry visage, among the ruins. But just then, her husband came into the room,

—clasped his uplifted hands, and exclaimed in a frightful mood of devotion, "Almighty Ruler!—bless and prosper my undertaking of this night!—give to those flames the force of giant's arms, that they may destroy all that falls within their range. Let them hurl the grave-stones of our murdered citizens on the heads of the tyrannical invader and his troops. Grant new strength to the troubled waters, that they may rise and overwhelm our oppressors. Let not Frederico's doom be sealed at such an hour;—let not his star of hope and prosperity how sink into darkness!"

Meanwhile, the approach of this extraordinary flotilla had roused all the Spanish army, and every man hastened to his appointed station. The Duke of Parma seemed, by his supernatural exertions and self-possession, to be present every where at one and the same moment. Surrounded by his officers, he dealt out directions for the protection of those points where danger from fire was most to be apprehended. "Gianibelli," no doubt," said he, "has been at work here, and has prepared us some diversion to beguile this long winter night." Accordingly, he laughed aloud as he saw the first flat-bottomed boats (which ap-

peared, for deception's sake, as ordinary fire-vessels) carried by the force of the stream, aided by a strong breeze, amid the outworks of the bridge, where they were entangled, and their lights rapidly extinguished. Then another division floated on—but these, as Gianibelli expected, were soon dispersed and darkened as the former had been; —at length, the Hope drew near slowly and majestically. This ponderous vessel was like the rest, borne along with the current, and forced against the bridge—but not being, like them, repelled by the outworks, which were insufficient to withstand such an attack, she was driven close up to the railing of shipmasts, and halted in her course, just under the spot where the Duke of Parma stood with several of his officers. They supposed, however, that this intruder might as easily be disposed of as her precursors;—the soldiers rushed forward with iron-headed poles to force back the heavy vessel from the bridge; —the Duke himself assisted in this task, and, by his example, excited them to new courage. At that moment, Fernando Nunez made his appearance;—with a pale anxious visage, he besought the Prince, for Heaven's sake, to

leave the dangerous station which he now occupied,—but the latter, unwilling to be disturbed, acted as if he had not heard these remonstrances. Fernando at last seized him by the arm,—shouted in his ear the name of "Cassilda," and drew him away almost by violence. They returned to the Fort of Santa Maria, and, just as they were entering the gates, there took place a tremendous explosion, as if the very earth had been rent asunder! The Duke and his attendants were, by the concussion of the atmosphere, struck to the ground, but had received no serious injury. He was the first to recover his senses, and rouse himself from stupor, to witness the havock and utter confusion of his army, with the destruction of that bridge, which had cost him such labour and anxiety, and to hear the moans and shrieks of the wounded and dying sufferers. Even the river had been agitated to its inmost depths, so that all the works seemed to be under water, and that part of the bridge at which the *Hope* had exploded, was completely ruined. "Gianibelli!" cried the Duke, gnashing his teeth with rage, "thou hast here wounded me for the second time; but, though wounded, thou shalt find that

I am not yet vanquished." With that unshaken composure and dignity, which are only to be found in minds of the most heroic mould, he employed himself directly on the necessary measures for extinguishing the fire that spread in various directions,—and prepared for the reception of the Zealand fleet, for he had no doubt that the Admiral would immediately make his appearance, —and take advantage, if possible, of the breach which had been gained.

At last, the morning broke, and the wintry sun showed to their full extent the devastations of the night. Above all, it was horrible to look on the multitude of dead bodies, and on the wounded, to whom it had yet been impracticable to render any assistance. Had there been an earthquake, the tokens of disaster could scarcely have been more formidable. Yet, the Zealand fleet did not arrive; and the Duke saw, to his great satisfaction, that Antwerp had expended her resources without any important consequence; for the evil worked against him by the *Hope* had not rendered him hopeless,—and no sooner had the bridge been thus demolished, than he began to build it together anew. As to the *Fortune*, she

had been driven to the opposite shore near Santo Philippo, where she had struck on a reef, and sunk without effecting any purpose.

When the thunder of the explosion was heard in Antwerp, Frederico seized his wife's hand, pressed it passionately to his heart, and exclaimed in a tone of rapture,—"God be praised—there the fort must have been shivered—and the bridge annihilated!" "My father!" said Cassilda, in a half audible whisper. "Infamous pander!" growled Gianibelli, and hastened down to the harbour in order to give farther directions. At day-break, vessels were sent out to bring intelligence, and great rewards promised to the men, if they would sail past the bridge and announce the event which had so opportunely taken place to the commander at Fort Lillo. As soon as they had got beyond the bulwark, they were directed to send up fire-balls, in order that the Antwerp citizens might be assured that all had succeeded. The vessels returned, however, and their captains declared, that the bridge was still in its former condition, and the passage as impracticable as ever. "Impossible!" cried Frederico, "Heaven is not thus unjust; and

my labour cannot have been utterly in vain. The cowards have not ventured near enough to ascertain the truth." St Aldegonde, in consequence of these remonstrances, sent other ships, but the men were indeed panic-struck, and turned back without having reached the Spanish station.

The people now began to murmur; and Antwerp was more disquieted than ever; hints were dropped of treachery and connivance; no Catholic durst henceforth appear on the streets without danger of being attacked and insulted. Under these circumstances, Frederico levied fifty horsemen, and rode out, that he might convince himself what was the real conclusion of this affair. But even here he was disappointed; the enemy had advanced farther than he was aware, and he had not gone half a mile, when a band of Spanish pikemen came to meet him. "Comrades," cried Frederico to his own soldiers, "you are aware that we must have intelligence, let it cost what it may. Let us attack these men, therefore, though they are by number an overmatch, and if we take but one prisoner, our object will be gained." The horsemen, by whom he was attended,

were well chosen; they rushed outrageously on the Spaniards, who received them on their pikes, and stood with surprising firmness, while their musketry from the rear ranks kept up a murderous fire against the Netherlanders. The latter continued to press forward, however, and were successful; the Spaniards were obliged to give way; our hero took ten prisoners, and among these was the captain of the band—Fernando Nunez! With a dismal frown, as a Flemish dragoon began to plunder his person, he recognized Gianibelli, who bestowed on him a look of recognition equally dark and portentous, at the same time commanding the soldier to desist. Nunez grinned, and bit his lips with rage. "Traitor!" he exclaimed, "that God has given me into thy hands is indeed the severest punishment that might be inflicted for my sins!" Without deigning to make him any answer, Gianibelli rode back to Antwerp, and his troop followed him with their prisoners. "St Aldegonde," said he on his arrival, "I deliver into your charge the unworthy father of my beloved Cassilda. You will appoint for him a prison suitable to his rank, and forget not that he is *my* captive, and that it is of

the utmost importance for us to keep him here. But so far as I can understand the confessions extorted from the other Spaniards, the bridge is destroyed. I must have the conviction of my own senses, however. Give me, therefore, a ship, and I shall set out immediately, for the cowards who were last employed, had not resolution to venture within sight of the Spanish works. I shall pass by them, and, God willing, shall return hither with the Zealand fleet." He went, accordingly, followed by Cassilda's blessing and fervent prayers; she had yet no suspicion of her father's imprisonment. With his telescope raised, Frederico now stood courageously on the deck, while, at a curve of the river, he came within range of a small Spanish battery, by which he was immediately assailed. But this did not interrupt his progress; he seemed miraculously saved, and the vessel advanced, till he could distinctly see the ruins of the bridge. There, to his great vexation and astonishment, the Spaniards were again in full activity, and the nearer he approached, the more firmly he was convinced, that the Duke, in this short space of time, had in such manner repaired the bulwark, and supplied the breach with

iron chains, that it would be as impossible as ever for ships to make good their passage. A shower of musket balls now fell around him, and he perceived that his undertaking was quite hopeless. He tacked about, therefore, hearing peals of scornful laughter from the Spaniards, and arrived in Antwerp miserably disappointed.

Night had begun to close, when he disembarked on the quay, and, instead of asking questions, all who met him had already anticipated the truth, and passed by him timidly, and in silence. He hastened to St Aldegonde, whom he found at the Senate-House, where our hero had now the mortification of laying the disheartening result of his embassy before the assembled council. When he entered the hall, he found them engaged in a very serious debate, but, without waiting to inquire what subject had thus engaged them, he explained the full extent of their danger, concluding with a request, that they would immediately vote to him the means of making a second attempt similar to the former, but which, he trusted, might have a more fortunate termination. "The intelligence you bring to us," said St Aldegonde, "is no doubt gloomy and alarm-

ing; but you, at least, may on this occasion feel altogether free from self-reproach, while we, on the other hand, must confess, that we reposed too little confidence in your schemes, and, therefore, the fortunate moment has been lost. Antwerp is, in truth, much indebted to you, and it is doubly painful for one who, like myself, has always been your friend, to say that, instead of expressing our gratitude as we ought to do, we must now, for the sake of the commonweal, offend and distress you very deeply."—"*Must!*" answered Frederico with his darkest frown, "how then, and whence arises this necessity?" "Your wife," answered St Aldegonde, "is now in prison." "My Cassilda!" said he, starting as from a dream. "So it is," answered the Burgomeister coldly, "we found on the person of the Spanish captain, Fernando Nunez, this billet. Read it yourself, and then judge whether, with such proofs in our possession, we could act otherwise than we have done."

Frederico perused the letter. It was the same which Cassilda had written at Catharina's house, and placed behind the statue of St Peter. He laid it on the table without a word. "Besides,"

resumed St Aldegonde, "this mysterious billet has very probably been the means of saving the life of the Duke of Parma. According to accounts which we have received from the captives, Fernando Nunez, just before the explosion, made his appearance, and almost by violence led away the Duke from the bridge. In his gratitude for that interference, the Prince promoted Nunez to the rank of captain, after which it was the will of Providence, that, on the first service undertaken by him, he should fall into your power as a prisoner." Frederico still remained with his arms folded, looking sternly on the ground. "Nay, worthy friend," said St Aldegonde, "be not thus overcome. We were forced to act as we have done; we were under the necessity of conducting her to prison, in order that she might be safe from the infuriated populace. Be assured that we shall not forget your feelings as a husband, and that Cassilda shall be treated as leniently as possible." "But," murmured Frederico, "she has then saved the Duke's life?" "If you would wish to see her," added St Aldegonde, who did not hear these words, "this will not be refused to you." "No," answered Frederico, in a

voice of thunder, " not a word more of her, but act as you think proper. Only give me ships and gunpowder, and I shall again prepare for the Duke such a midnight divertisement, as he little reckons on, and at which no warning genius will appear for his rescue; but instant activity is required; the commonweal is at stake, and not a moment should be lost in granting me the supplies which I thus demand of you." With these words, he left the assembly, and the council soon after dissolved.

On the following morning, St Aldegonde came into Frederico's apartment. " Sir Knight," said he, " the truly great mind should soar above all ordinary passions. You seem to misunderstand the character of Cassilda, whose error we must in our hearts excuse, even though as judges we are forced to condemn her. Would you not desire to see her? Ought she not to hear from you, even a few words, to say that you forgive her?" " No!" answered Frederico, knitting his brows, " she now belongs to you; she is wholly in your power, and I shall not interfere with your rights." " She wished to speak with her father," said St Aldegonde, " will you permit this?"

"You are burgomeister," answered our hero, "fulfil your own duties, and forget that Cassilda is the wife of Frederico Gianibelli. As for my prisoner, Fernando Nunez, I grant him freely my permission to meet with his daughter. Chance has again brought them within the same town walls; I would not be the means of causing their second separation; and they may share the fate which hangs over them together." "Gianibelli," replied St Aldegonde, in a very grave and severe tone, "who knows how soon our last hour may strike, and how much we ourselves may then have need of compassion? Therefore, I beg once more that you will forgive your Cassilda, and that you will dismiss from your mind that groundless belief, that she has carried on any secret intercourse with the Duke. Were this possible, she would not have renounced him for your sake, nor fled from his protection in Spain. Moreover, I would advise that you should set her father at liberty,—for whom the Duke has offered a most important ransom. By giving him up, we shall receive back the brave Teligny,—and the citizens of Antwerp would bless you for adopting a resolution so noble."

"As to the ransom adequate for the Spanish captive, Fernando Nunez," said Frederico, "it is my part to determine what it ought to be.—So long as I live he shall remain in prison; such is my pleasure, and it is a resolution which I shall not forego to gratify the Duke's humour. Command me to devote my heart's blood, my life,—I am prepared to make any such sacrifice for your sake, and that of your commonwealth,—but as to the prisoner,—no!—he is mine, and I shall hold him fast!"—"But if the senate command his being set at liberty;" said St Aldegonde, "if the people insisted that it must be so,—would you assert your own will against theirs?"—"Nay," answered Frederico, "I would do more;—in my disdain of your unjust conduct, I should leave Antwerp to her fate, you should never behold me again. I thought you had known Gianibelli better than to suppose that aught could be gained from him by threats and defiance!" For the first time St Aldegonde, in a mood of gloom and discontent, parted from his friend, whose mind was now torn by conflicting emotions. He, indeed, loved Cassilda as sincerely as ever, and his pride had been more wounded than his affection.

When St Aldegonde had taken his leave, he walked gloomily towards the window, and was stationed there, lost in thought, when Catharina van der Weert rushed breathless and agitated into the room. "If you have not lost all the feelings of a man," she exclaimed, "by the love you once bore to Cassilda, and the happiness you enjoyed in her presence, I implore you to have compassion on the poor orphan, whose father died on the scaffold, and whose lover now pines a hopeless prisoner under the power of our enemies. Grant the Spanish captain his liberty in return for that of Teligny,—your faithful and once cherished friend. Sacrifice but this much of your imperious will at the shrine of love, of friendship, and filial affection."

Frederico fixed his eyes gloomily on the ground, but made no answer. "You are silent," said Catharina; "your heart has become steeled against every emotion, and you will not utter one word of consolation for my distresses?"—"Nay," said Frederico, interrupting her, "you determined, of your own free will, that you would never again behold Teligny within the walls of Antwerp. By your own sentence, he was driven

out in his despair to meet the fate which has overwhelmed him. "Aye, too truly have you spoken. I did so," answered Catharina; "but since my betrothed lover fell into the hands of the Spaniards, I have bitterly atoned for the injustice of which I was then guilty. Even for that very cause I betake myself to you, in humble supplication, that you will grant me Teligny's ransom. To you alone I look for the recovery of my soul's peace—on your answer depend all the hopes that are left to me in this world!" She threw herself at his feet, but he raised her coldly and formally. "You have said but the truth," he exclaimed; "my heart is steeled against every emotion such as you labour to excite. He who has possessed and lost Heaven as I have done, thenceforth becomes the denizen, nay, the slave of hell!" At these wild words, she seized his arm once more, and looked at him imploringly—suddenly, however, as if struck by some secret recollection, she recoiled, and exclaimed, "What could I expect from the man who casts off his affectionate faithful wife—allowing her to pine away in a solitary dungeon, and who cherishes no other passion but that of wild insatiable

ambition? Farewell, Gianibelli! Catharina van der Weert came hither in her humility and affliction, with a poor entreaty, which you have rejected with disdain. But know, Signor, that the forsaken orphan will yet find other means of obtaining that justice which you have denied to her prayers!"

"Contemptible woman!" exclaimed Frederico, as she left his apartment,—and he became absorbed again in his own dreams; but, alas! of all sufferings to a manly generous spirit, this must be the severest, to feel that he struggles under contending impulses—that he is acting at variance with his own heart. Gianibelli's love to Cassilda was unconquerable and fervent;—oftentimes her well-known form rose on his imagination,—more beautiful, more attractive than ever, but then,—the detested visage of his rival, the prosperous high-born Duke came betwixt them, grinning in scornful triumph, and every after emotion yielded to jealousy and hatred. At those moments, too, when his love had gained a transient ascendancy,—when he almost determined to beg of the senate that she should be set at liberty, on the plea that she had but acted, for a

moment, the part of an affectionate daughter,—and that the Duke's rescue was the result of mere chance,—the question forced itself on his mind,—if Cassilda were freed, would she not also entreat him to take the ransom offered for her father, and could he ever permit the Duke to gain such a triumph?

For several days he continued under the influence of this conflict, but at last ambition prevailed. He determined to exert himself with more energy than ever, in hopes, by that means, to distract his attention, and allay the pain of self-reproach, but in vain. Meanwhile, Cassilda remained uncomplaining and perfectly resigned in her prison, where she had a cell less gloomy and repulsive than that of an ordinary captive, though the doors and windows were firmly secured with iron bars. One day it happened, that St Aldegonde and other senators came and questioned her more minutely than before, regarding the billet which they had discovered. She confessed, without the slightest hesitation or reserve, the circumstances by which she had been induced to write the lines,—adding, that she could not possibly repent of having thus once fulfilled her

duty to a father;—as to the Duke of Parma's life being saved, it had been the will of providence to make her the means of that result, but without any intention of her own. St Aldegonde now endeavoured to soothe her feelings for the present moment, and her apprehensions for the future. "I require no consolation," she answered; "an inward voice has oftentimes warned me, that with you—with Antwerp, my fate, whether good or evil, will be united;—on this account, I am tranquil, and prepared in mind for all that can ensue;—only I wish that my husband were convinced of my innocence, and that I have never been in thought, word, or deed, unfaithful to him. His displeasure is the sole cause of the pain which I now endure. Tell Frederico this, and reserve your consolations for him, to whom I well know that jealousy must prove a cruel torment."

On the afternoon of the following day, she was sitting, as usual, alone, and lost in thought, when the door opened, and her father, Fernando Nunez, appeared before her. "Is it *thus*, Cassilda, that we meet again?" said he in a stern rough tone. "My father!" she exclaimed, and would have

fallen into his arms, but he repulsed her, though not harshly. "I should despise and curse thee," he resumed, "did I not know that it is for my sake that thou art now doomed to pine in this miserable prison,—that because thou did'st not hate me, thou hast encountered hatred. Oh! too well do I know all this! During the few days that I have lived here a prisoner, I have heard, from the lips of numberless witnesses, how basely thou hast been deceived. The traitor who, with one word, could restore thee to liberty, loves thee no longer,—the beautiful rose is withered; he has sated himself with its fragrance, and casts it away to be trodden into the dust." "No—no, my father!" exclaimed Cassilda, "that he still loves me is a truth felt in my inmost heart; though his affection now seems to sleep under the influence of jealousy and wounded pride, it will awake and beam forth more ardently than ever ere it dies."—"And when we think of the generous noble-minded Duke," said Nunez; "he whose love is unchangeable, who would himself have sacrificed all the pride of rank, and have led thee to the altar—" "Speak not of him, I conjure you," said Cassilda, in a tone of anger and

dignity; "those words become not a father to utter, which his daughter cannot hear without shame and aversion. Rather be to me a messenger of peace! I have had already my share of grief, and might I not be indulged, for a short space, the happiness of believing, even were it but a dream, that I am in the presence of a parent whom I can love and honour?" The rough soldier, from whose mind all softer emotions had long been estranged, could not withstand this appeal. He pressed Cassilda tenderly to his heart, and never spoke to her again of the Prince. Thus he was allowed to visit her every day for some weeks afterwards. Cassilda did not even receive any message from Gianibelli; and those interviews with her father, were the only variety afforded in her wearisome confinement.

There is no grief if it is unblended with self-reproach, to which music may not sometimes supply a congenial mode of utterance; and one evening Cassilda, with her lute on her arm, was stationed at the window by moonlight. The night had closed in with weather stormy and variable; dark clouds came ever and anon, driven

across the moon, that still broke out again with effulgence, rendered brighter by contrast. "An emblem of my life!" said she, while the tears shone trembling in her eyes. "It has been spent amid clouds and tempests; only brief intervals of unspeakable happiness broke through them, to illumine my toilsome pilgrimage. She raised her head, with its beautiful dishevelled tresses, and looked up to the starry heavens,—to the illimitable realms of the Almighty Father, who chastises where he loves, and guides all his faithful servants, through the rough paths of this life, to their home of everlasting rest. She struck some mournful chords on her lute; old remembrances crowded on her mind, and, in a low plaintive voice, she began to sing a Spanish ballad, describing the calm that follows a storm at sea,—when she was interrupted by a cautious knocking at the door. She started up, when a man, wearing a mask, rushed in; he made her a signal to be silent, and to follow him. Cassilda was now terrified; for she could not recognise in his figure any one that she had ever seen before. In his gestures he expressed the utmost haste and impatience—laying his hand on his lips, in token

that he dared not answer, when she demanded, "Who art thou?" At last he took her gently by the arm to lead her away, and, without farther reflection, she followed him. They proceeded through long vaulted passages, where their footsteps echoed strangely amid the reign of solitude and darkness, till, on arriving at a low Gothic door, studded with iron, it was opened, and they stepped out into the cold air of that stormy night.

"You are free, my beloved Cassilda," said a voice meeting her from without, and immediately she was clasped in the embrace of some one whom, in her confusion, she yet scarcely recognised. "Have you forgotten the voice of your own faithful Catharina?" said her friend—"And look,—here, too, is your father, who is now at liberty. Thank Heaven, my plans for you, as well as for him, have succeeded. But hasten, I conjure you, from this place—fly ere it is possible that you can be missed." Catharina seized her by one arm; her father supported her on the other side, and thus she was forced, for a considerable distance, to go with them. Suddenly she arrested their hurried progress. "Yonder—yonder is my home," cried she, pointing to the harbour, and to the house of

Gianibelli,—"lead me thither, or leave me alone, and fly before the avenging arm of justice overtakes you!"—"And thou wilt forsake me yet another time?" said Fernando, gnashing his teeth with rage. "Here—*here* alone is my happiness," cried Cassilda, "and you would force me hence to misery and guilt. Here is safety,—elsewhere destruction!" "Ungrateful traitress," cried Nunez, exasperated to frenzy, and drawing his dagger,—"either shalt thou follow me to the Spanish camp, or this hour shall be thy last!" "Shrink not!" answered Cassilda—strike boldly; I shall then fulfil my vow to Frederico—love even unto death!" Catharina had almost wrested the dagger from the madman's grasp. "Away, away!" cried she,—"if you would not sacrifice both your own life and mine. Cassilda, I shall remain with you. Go, go—I beseech you—this man will be your convoy;" added she, pointing to the person who had brought her friend out of prison—"hasten, for if you remain for another hour within sight of Antwerp's walls, we are lost." Still growling out threats and imprecations against his daughter, the detestable Nunez at length retired.

CHAPTER III.

"THAT you would not return with him to the Spanish army," said Catharina to her friend when they were left alone, "I was thoroughly convinced. My Cassilda's heart is like a flower that will expand its leaves but to the chaste sunlight of a husband's love,—and I, too,—rejoice with me,—I have freed my betrothed lover, Teligny: I have broken his chains, along with those of Fernando Nunez. As for your captivity, how easy was the task for a sincere friend to find means of opening your prison gates!—The blessed religion of our ancestors gives us the courage, the strength, and ingenuity to fulfil every good and beneficent purpose."

They had, meanwhile, arrived at the house of Gianibelli, when Catharina retired, and Cassilda stood thoughtfully at the well-known threshold of her own home. Still a feeble light was visible from

the window of her husband's apartment, and at intervals she caught some melancholy dying tones of his guitar. She shuddered at these sounds,—. "Heaven only knows in what state I shall now find him!" said she to herself, as with fear and trembling she passed up stairs, and knocked gently at the door. Frederico was seated beside a lamp, now almost expiring, though the flame rose fitfully at intervals, like the last struggles of a parting spirit, and illumed his pale grief-worn countenance. The bustle of his daily occupations served, in some measure, to distract his mind from gloomy reflections, that, in the still hours of night, gained double strength, and the mournful notes of his guitar rather deepened the impression of his utter loneliness. Watching the lamp's faint glimmer, he remembered how uncertain is human life, when the sources of joy are decayed by which alone existence is upheld;—the thought rose on his mind, and vibrated with a cold shuddering through every nerve, that Cassilda's long imprisonment might cause her premature death,—when the door opened very slowly, and she herself entered. Pale, trembling, and anxious, as Cassilda now

appeared, it was not to be wondered at that the train of his apprehensions should at first be strengthened, rather than dispelled. "Merciful Heaven!" he exclaimed, starting up—"it is her ghost!" But, in the next moment, the warm heaving bosom that was pressed against his—the long protracted ardent kiss that was imprinted on his lips—that embrace, and that kiss, so truly the same as in former years, convinced him that it was no phantom, but his own loving and beautiful wife, whom he now clasped in his arms.

"And you refused, then, to go with your father?" said he, when she had briefly narrated the adventures of the night, though without mentioning Catharina. "You did not leave me for the sake of that renowned Prince of Parma, who still loves you, but hastened to the melancholy home of your husband, who had allowed you to remain in prison, and refused to send even one message of encouragement and consolation. Oh! my Cassilda! you, who are in spirit so far above me,—whose affection, like a divine ...ns unchanged, and equally in joy and ...—when rewarded or oppressed, always ...nd ardent—forgive—if it be possible,

forgive me! Nothing shall ever more effect our separation.—Love even unto death!"—"And fidelity for ever!" answered Cassilda, blushing deeply; and, with these words, she sunk unresisting into his arms.

Among the Antwerp senators, who learned next morning the escape of both prisoners, there arose an extraordinary alarm and commotion. The people had been excessively enraged against Gianibelli—looking on him as the sole cause that their favourite Teligny had not returned to Antwerp. The assembled senators considered the flight of Cassilda very important and hazardous, and were not a little astonished when Gianibelli made his appearance in the council-chamber, and informed them that his wife had been taken out of prison against her own will,—that she had escaped from her father, and returned to his house, thus affording the surest proof, that she never could have cherished any design against the commonweal of Antwerp, or in favour of the Duke of Parma,—bu
led to write that unfortunate billet h
impulse of filial duty. He begged c
therefore, that they would ratify i

which was agreed to without the slightest opposition; and they were the more disposed to this measure, as they now received a dispatch from the Spanish camp, with news that Teligny had been freed. He had been obliged, however, to grant his word of honour, that he would not bear arms for the freedom of Antwerp. The same ambassador who brought the Duke of Parma's letter to the senate, had also one of Teligny to Catharina, of which the contents were:—

"You have sworn that you will never meet me again within the walls of our native town;—for this reason, though with an almost broken heart, I have entered into conditions not to defend the citizens of Antwerp, by whom Adrian van der Weert was brought to the scaffold. But there are other stations where my sword may yet be wielded for my native land, and to one or other of these I shall now hasten. Farewell."

The Spanish Prince had now restored his floating bridge, with its railing of masts, into as formidable a condition as before. He had strengthened his outer-works also, in order to

ward off any future attacks of Gianibelli's fire-vessels. The latter was, meanwhile, restless and indefatigable in his preparations for a new assault;—the senators were also better disposed to listen to his schemes than before;—so that, in a short time, other ships were sacrificed, in order to be filled with powder,—and, accompanied by a flottilla of flat-bottomed boats, were sent down the Scheldt;—consequently, the bridge was demolished a second time, or, at least, injured more than on the former occasion; but, on account of adverse winds, the Zealand fleet was prevented from making its appearance:—so this adventure proved ineffectual. A third attack was now made; which last proved altogether abortive, for the Spaniards were too much on their guard; and Gianibelli himself was obliged to inform the senate, that he knew not what to recommend, and that they should themselves devise some new mode of defence.

Only beneath his own roof, in the arms of his beloved Cassilda, who had now become dearer to him than ever, could he find any solace or mitigation of his distress at these many failures. He was, indeed, driven almost to despair, and ex-

posed himself to every danger,—sometimes with pike in hand, joining with the brave Scotsmen, and within the next hour taking his place as a private dragoon with the Netherlanders. On the slightest intimation of a skirmish, he hastened to the spot, being resolved that, whatever were the result, his own exertions should not be spared. From all those engagements, he returned home to Cassilda, without even the slightest bodily wound, though with a mind harassed and torn by the most violent emotions. *Her* composure, however, was unconquerable. "My beloved Frederico," said she, "let us enjoy the last drops that the cup of life affords us, with hearts unchanged, cheerful, and innocent. The death-bell of Antwerp and her liberty will sound, perhaps, ere long, and, in the same hour, we shall have finished our allotted task, and have done with this world."

The Spanish Prince, who had been informed by Fernando Nunez of Cassilda's unabated constancy and resolution, was afraid that this heroic woman would not survive her husband's death. In order, at all events, to save her life, he sent an embassy to Gianibelli, offering, that if, in the pre-

sent state of Antwerp, he wished to leave the town, he should be at liberty to do so;—that he might go to England, Germany, or whithersoever he was most inclined,—adding, that money should be supplied for his expences, and that the Prince would guarantee his safety in accepting this proposal. Our hero answered as follows:—"Gianibelli will never turn coward, and fly from his destiny. Either shall he sing a 'Te Deum' on the walls of this town, freed from its invaders, or bury himself under its ruins. *So* also would Alexander of Parma act, if he were in the place of Gianibelli, who thinks himself not less honourable, in the fulfilment of duty, than the Prince who has thought proper to insult him by the message just received."

While he traced these lines, Cassilda stood by the table, and fixed on him a penetrating gaze. "The high-born and the great," said she, "are, methinks, both vain and foolish!—They believe, forsooth, that they alone are heroes,—and that, for the sake of rescuing our own transitory lives, we, the humbler denizens of this world, must be content to make any sacrifice. Mark you, Frederico,—with every hour that now passes,—with

every cannon shot which is fired to no purpose, —I count the moments of my life,—and make up gradually my reckoning with fate. Seek not, I pray you, for death, in those paltry engagements, where your existence would be offered up in vain. Save it rather, as long as you can still be of service,—and when, at length, the Spaniards shall force their way over the ruined ramparts of this town, let us join hand in hand;—I shall go with you to the breach, and we shall die together in its defence."

The plans of destroying the bridge, and gaining a free passage through the Scheldt, had now been completely abandoned. On the suggestion of Gianibelli, it was resolved to bore through the dam at Covenstein, so that the whole country might be thrown under water; and, after this, to venture a last attack on the Spanish station. Count Hohenlohe, Admiral of the Zealand fleet, approved of this scheme, and promised his assistance. From the sharp experienced eyes of the Duke of Parma, however, the importance of this point had not been concealed. Even at the commencement of the siege, he had guarded Co-

venstein, in such manner, with ramparts and batteries, that any attack in this quarter must require both powerful forces, and the most heroic resolution in their commander.

All the smaller dams had been cut through ;—already the Zealand ships advanced on their new sea-room towards the bulwark at Covenstein ;—and, on the following morning, the attack was to be made. A frightful silence now reigned through the desolate streets of Antwerp. On that evening, every citizen remained at his own house, surrounded by his family, believing that these might be the last moments which he could enjoy in their society. It is a strange and fearful emotion which prevails resistlessly in the minds of men, when, in the decisive hour, their long cherished hopes are passing away. If the next hour has only struck, then there is no longer any suspense,—no choice between good or evil fortune,—nothing more left to hope or to fear ;—the die has fallen, and their fates are decided immoveably and changeless for ever !—On this evening, too, Gianibelli sat at home with his wife ; and, in silence, they gazed together on the setting sun. " When to-morrow that orb again descends," said he, " deep,—blood-

red even as now, then the lot of Antwerp and ours, too, will be decided. This undertaking is our *last* resource." "The last!" repeated his wife in a faint voice. "Aye," said he, "my dearest Cassilda,—assuredly the *last*. If victory be not ours to-morrow, then we may crawl back like reptiles into our narrow cells, but we dare speak no more of conquest, nor of liberty. Yet, a few days or hours perchance, we may contrive to live, but this is all. The proud Duke will advance,—one rampart will give way after another,—and, meanwhile, famine will deprive the miserable inhabitants of spirit, even to fall nobly. By to-morrow's dawn,—by the next blood-red sun gleams, Cassilda, the strife begins; before evening it is over, and, perhaps, all is lost!"

The morning had not yet broke,—the stars were still gleaming in Heaven, when four illumination vessels were dispatched from Fort Lillo towards the dam at Covenstein. The large ships of the Zealand fleet were also drawn out in line opposite to the fortifications. Between the bridge, and the rampart of St George, an ascent was made on the dike, and, with wonderful alacrity, a

breast-work prepared, in order to disunite the two hostile batteries. Under this protection, the pioneers now laboured to cut through the dike, and every soldier, being aware how important was the undertaking, worked with redoubled strength. The Antwerp fleet also began from the other side to attack the Spaniards; and the infantry from town supported the brave Zealanders, who stood nobly by their breast-work, repulsing every attempt made against them.

Intoxicated with their first success, the commanders thought that their victory was already certain. They began even to empty provisions and merchandise from the Zealand ships, and load with them their small Antwerp vessels, thus losing and frittering away the precious time. The task of the pioneers on the dam was no longer carried on with the former rapidity and perseverance. The energy of the workmen became, indeed, quite lamed, when Count Hohenlohe and St Aldegonde went into a small merchantman, which they had loaded, and exactly at the decisive moment, put about to Antwerp to celebrate there the triumph which, in their foolish vanity, they believed that they had won. Amid the ringing

of bells, and thunder of cannon, they entered the harbour, where Gianibelli stood with a band of his brave Scotsmen, impatiently waiting for intelligence from the bridge. They told him briefly what had occurred. "These should be no peals of rejoicing that are now rung," he answered. "These are passing-bells that receive you here,—and your cannon-shots are no better than the last groans of expiring Antwerp. Herr burgomeister, and my lord admiral, your presence here is useless, and your absence from the scene of action may have consequences the most disastrous. On, then, my faithful comrades!" added he, addressing himself to the men that he had collected round him. "Away to the scene of conflict, by land or sea, for in this hour our friends have need of us."

The Duke of Parma stood, meanwhile, with the true composure of a hero on the bridge, and gave the necessary orders to guard against the fire-ships, which were now incessantly sent against him. He had adopted the precaution, that, when these floating mines were pressing on the barrier, it might be opened in several places, so as to let them pass and injure the Zealand fleet, rather than himself. By dint of almost supernatural

exertions, and a thousand times risking his own life, the heroic Prince had the satisfaction at last of perceiving that this attack would be ineffectual against him. Being satisfied that his favourite bulwark was out of danger, he hastened with several hundred Spanish pikemen to defend Covenstein, and arrived there when all was nearly lost. The stake bastion having suffered by the incessant fire of the fleet, had almost given way,—the brave Gamboa, its defender, lay severely wounded,—most of his soldiers were killed; while, on the other hand, the forces of the Netherlanders increased every hour in number. The Duke then collected about him almost all the troops that he could find in the trenches or elsewhere,—placed himself in the van, and advanced in order, by his presence, to restore the sinking hopes of his party.

Under shelter of the temporary breastwork, between the stake bastion and that of St George, now fought the best—the very kernel and marrow of the Flemish troops. Here, on this decisive point, they knew that the liberty of their native land was to be decided,—and they were determined in this place to conquer or die. At

length Gianibelli arrived with his little band, and landed at the very same moment when the Duke of Parma had succeeded in reducing the confused Spaniards into order, and was leading them onwards for a new attack. Fate had thus once more brought the two heroes together. They fought closely, man to man, shield clashing on shield. "Cassilda" was the battle-cry of Gianibelli, and, shouting her name aloud, he inflicted a frightful blow on the Duke's helmet; but, in the next instant, the pike of a Spanish soldier struck him to the ground. The Netherlanders and Scotsmen fought nobly round their leader;—they covered him with their shields,—rescued him, and he was carried back on board ship;—but when Gianibelli thus fell wounded, the last courage and spirit of his men were effectually crushed. The Italians and Spaniards now contended with each other for the honour of being the first at the breastwork. It was mounted and won accordingly. Antwerp's final hopes died with the few faithful pioneers who were slain in defending it. The day drew near to that fatal and blood-red sunset that Gianibelli had anticipated with such gloomy forebodings.

For several days our hero was confined to his couch, languishing under severe wounds. His faithful Cassilda sat by him unwearied, holding his burning hand within hers, and all the while she was tranquil and resolute. At length, St Aldegonde came one morning into his room with a letter. "Were it possible, my dear friend," said he, "to bring you any message of consolation in a time like this, perhaps I might do so now. The Duke of Parma, who has come close to our gates, and commanded us to surrender, has sent this open letter addressed to you. Herein, he gives you express permission (as you are now wounded, and can no longer be of service in defence of Antwerp,) to depart from hence to some quiet abode, where your health may be fully restored. You may go where you will, along with your wife. The Duke pledges his word of honour that no measure shall be taken to effect your separation, or in any way to distress you. Besides, he offers to give hostages for your security, and it is, therefore, my counsel that you should accept of his proposal; the enemy are close upon us,—and we are no longer safe from their cannon-shot and grenades. You re-

quire rest, and here, least of all, can you obtain a fair chance of recovery; you must directly fall into the power of the conqueror, who now leaves you at perfect liberty to depart." The wounded hero was not unmoved by this offer. "Though in courage I am thine equal," said he, "yet, Alexander of Parma, I must allow, thou surpassest me in generosity, as well as in good fortune. Let the Duke know," added he, in a feebler tone—"that I am not ungrateful; but that Gianibelli, and his wife Cassilda Nunez, will survive or perish with the liberty of Antwerp,—and if the city fall, will enter gladly through the dark gates of the tomb, to the realms of everlasting liberty and rest." Having thus spoken, he sank back exhausted on his couch. "And you, noble lady," said St Aldegonde, turning to Cassilda, "can you approve of this resolve?" "I shall share the lot of my husband," said she, "whether in joy or in sorrow,—sun-light or darkness, I shall live or die with him!" "Generous, noble-minded victims!" said the venerable St Aldegonde, may Heaven yet protect you, and have compassion on our unfortunate city."

But, in a short time, famine began to show her

direful power over the devoted inhabitants of Antwerp, while the enemy closed the circle always more narrowly around them. Every one, even the bravest, now despaired of rescue;—the people murmured at their fate, for hunger was yet more formidable than the swords of their assailants. Under these circumstances, the assembled senate debated, whether it would not be better to give up the town, after having made some tolerable conditions, than to wait till the worst had befallen them. While they were deliberating on this question, the great doors of the hall were opened, and Frederico Gianibelli was brought in on his couch, borne by his faithful Scotsmen.

"Once more," said he, in a faint voice—"I have come hither;—the dying man appears before you, that he may warn you for the last time! —Often, indeed, you have refused his counsels, as if they had been mere visions; but follow his advice, at least for this once.—Do not, I admonish, I conjure you—do not open Antwerp's gates to the Spaniards; defend your town to the last—from street to street, and from house to house;—think on Alba, and his pillory formed out of your melted cannon;—think of the scaf-

fold, on which the noblest of your people fell by the hands of the executioner. King Philip still lives, and the Duke of Parma is but his slavish implement, as the Duke of Alba proved before. Far better were it to perish as heroes—to bury yourselves in the ruins of your fortress, than to die, like degraded criminals, on the block. Farewell—this is the last appearance I can ever make in your senate-house, which I have so often entered, when I was yet in the bloom of youth and health —with those hopes fresh and vigorous in my heart —which are now withered for ever." Here he paused abruptly, and made a sign that his attendants should remove him, which was done; and after his retreat, the councillors sat for a long time in gloomy silence, with their eyes fixed on the ground. "Aye, truly," said Aldegonde at last, "Gianibelli is in the right. We ought to feel in our hearts the courage and resolution to die for our native land. Death is far better than the yoke of Spanish tyrants. Friends—countrymen, if you think as I do, let us join in one last effort." Yet the voices of a multitude, who now forced their way into the hall, interrupted his heroic exhortations. They demanded,

outrageously, that the town should be surrendered; famine had driven them to utter despair,—and St Aldegonde found that he must give way to their violence.

From the silence of the cannonade, and the deathlike stillness of the streets, Gianibelli, at his own house, apprehended what had taken place. "The cowards have yielded," said he to Cassilda, at a late hour of the evening. "Do not weep, dear child," added he to Catharina von der Weert, who could no longer restrain her tears; "all will soon be over. Ere the next day dawns, the dream of life will have ended." Cassilda kissed his pale lips, and, with a cheerfulness like that of a sainted martyr, nodded her approval of what he said; while Catharina, who, since Gianibelli was wounded, had not left her friend, now went out in search of intelligence.

Our hero's suspicion was confirmed. Antwerp had surrendered; and to-morrow's rising sun would no more shine on the free city, but on miserable slaves. The contest was past; and it was not till after a long refreshing sleep, that Gianibelli awoke on the morning of that fatal day. He heard the

drums beating, and the music of a Spanish march. "They are drawing near," said he; "I recognise the well-known sounds that have so often accompanied me to the battle-field. Yet, Alexander of Parma," added he, "proud and prosperous as thou art, think not that *my* presence shall heighten and adorn thy triumph! Gianibelli shall not fall living into the hands of his conqueror." With these words, he violently tore the bandage from his wounds. Cassilda was aware of his design, and did not hinder him; but Catharina shuddered with horror, and averted her eyes.

"Love even unto death!" said he, now expiring; "this vow, my beloved Cassilda, you have faithfully preserved inviolate—fidelity after death and for ever!" These were his last words; and in a few moments after he expired.

Fernando Nunez accompanied the Prince of Parma to Gianibelli's house. "My resolution is fixed," said the Duke, "I must once more see my brave enemy, much as he has done to offend and injure me. I shall forgive him, and ask his forgiveness—we shall be reconciled together;—nor need Cassilda fear my presence. No;—if

death indeed has already called him hence, she may retire into a convent, and there fulfil her vow of changeless fidelity." The house of mourning and death was silent; they opened the door for themselves, and found Cassilda kneeling in prayer over the pale remains of her idolized Frederico. "Come not nearer!" she exclaimed, "he has escaped from your triumph. His fortune sank,—his hopes were withered—you have now nothing to fear from that hero who alone could have opposed your career of victory. But in death as in life," added she, as the Duke advanced towards her, "he comes betwixt us. Love has travelled with me to his grave;—fidelity shall now be my guide to find him in a better world!" She had Gianibelli's dagger in her girdle;—she now plunged it into her heart, and fell silent and motionless on the body of her husband. "When my last hour shall arrive," said the Duke, "would that it might be my lot to appear with such an angelic guide before the judgment-throne of Heaven! And, without daring to approach the sacred remains of Cassilda and her lover, he left the house. Fernando Nunez now felt, for the first time, that

the grief of a bereft parent's heart is of all sufferings the deepest and most overpowering.

Catharina von der Weert was still present to perform the last sad duties for her friend, who was laid with her husband in one coffin, and Catharina strewed them with flowers. "Love even unto death—Fidelity for ever!" was the inscription which Alexander of Parma placed over their grave, where he many times shed tears of repentance and retribution. Time has now destroyed this monument of true love; but not long since, a cross was still visible on the spot where Gianibelli received his death wound at Covenstein.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

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